

Don't worry, be fulfilled: Exploring employee experience with leadership and fulfillment
in the Major Games context

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to explore the relationship between authentic leadership and workplace spirituality on the development of employees' perceived workplace fulfillment in the Major Games context. Where Major Games organizational contexts are understood as unique, given their high velocity environments that are extremely susceptible to change (Parent, Olver, & Séguin, 2009), employees experience distinct stressors, including time constraints, role ambiguity, job insecurity, and work-life conflict. Given leader impact on employees' perceived workplace fulfillment remains unknown (Parent et al., 2009), the preposition of this study is such that authentic leaders – said to positively influence employee attitudes, behaviours, and psychological wellbeing through prioritizing employees' values and by winning employees' trust and respect (Wang & Hsieh, 2013) – can positively respond to these unique stressors, thereby motivating employees to experience emotionally, spiritually, and intellectually engaging work, a beneficial outcome within this pressure-laden context.

For this study, a qualitative research design with a phenomenographical method was applied with 20 Major Games' employee participants, (i.e., employed from 2010 to present), who engaged in semi-structured interviews. Through open coding and thematic data analyses, the researcher discovered that it is through Major Games leaders applying characteristics of authentic leadership – including empowerment and social support – towards development of positive organizational cultures, Major Games employees may experience value congruence and sense of community (i.e., workplace spirituality), positively influencing the development of employees' perceived workplace fulfillment in the Major Games industry.

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CHAPTER I

PREFACE

Approaching March of 2015, I was itching for a change. On the cusp of completing my Bachelor of Sport Management (B.S.M.) degree from Brock University, I was searching for the next step to move forward in both my personal life and my professional career. Throughout the course of my undergraduate degree, I explored various ideas regarding future employment, though for the better part of my 4-year experience, few ideas significantly impacted me enough to follow a specific direction. Yet all of this changed in 2014 after progressing through a (core) Event Management undergraduate course, wherein both my personal desires for workplace experiences and my personality characteristics seemed to fit. When faced with the largest adult decision I had to make that involved the opportunity to travel to an unknown country beginning in May 2015 for a 5-month period to work on a Major Games event, I agreed without hesitation.

Fast forward to September 2016, I began cultivating a career with two Major Games employment experiences (i.e., first, the Samoa 2015 Commonwealth Youth Games; and second, the Rio 2016 Summer Olympic Games) now behind me. Through these international experiences, I identified the issues I experienced while working in the Major Games environment, and from these issues, could develop questions regarding the operation and management of the particular Major Games industry. For example, throughout my work experiences, I noticed an overall lack of focus on human resource management and leadership practices (e.g., leaders had little background knowledge of leading people; there were few available resources for employees regarding issues

experienced in the workplace), both of which are commonly thought to have a large capacity to influence employees. My observations caused me to reflect upon and ultimately question a number of elements I encountered, including: my employment experience in the high intensity Major Games work environment; the influence of my leaders on my employment experience; and, employee needs particular to this unique environment. Though I had developed a belief through my undergraduate studies that when organizations service employees' needs, employees will (in turn) service organizations to positive ends, this perspective gained further traction when I realized many organizations and leaders in the sport industry are seemingly unconscious to their employees' needs and goals. Upon commencement of studies within the Master of Arts (M.A.) program, these beliefs and experiences ultimately played a central role in formulating the following research exploration involving topics of Major Games event management, leadership, and employee fulfillment.

INTRODUCTION

The researcher's fascination with Major Games began as a young spectator and admirer of large events ranging from the International Ice Hockey Federation (IIHF) World Championships to various Summer and Winter Olympic Games. In furthering her undergraduate degree, the researcher supported her future career growth in the industry by expanding her knowledge, refining her skills, and partaking in various experiences relevant to her area of interest, through both theoretical and practical industry endeavours (i.e., the Samoa 2015 Commonwealth Youth Games; the Rio 2016 Summer Olympic Games).

During the 5-month period working as a member of the Secretariat (Organizing

Committee) for the Samoa 2015 Commonwealth Youth Games, the researcher worked in various functional areas, including: accreditation, sponsorship, facility and venue management, media relations, and operational planning. Furthermore, in July of 2016, the researcher worked as the Technical Official Coordinator for the Weightlifting (men's and women's) event at the Rio 2016 Summer Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, where she was responsible for coordinating and liaising on behalf of the Technical Official clientele with Rio2016 employees in functional areas including: travel, transportation, accommodation, uniforms, accreditation, food & beverage, etc., while working to recognize and resolve issues.

From this experience, the researcher formulated the research purpose and questions which guide this study, where the purpose was to explore the significance of authentic leadership and workplace spirituality on the development of employees' perceived workplace fulfillment in the Major Games industry. Beyond completion of this research study, the researcher intends to further cultivate a career assisting in the planning and delivery of large-scale international Major Games events, working with diverse groups of people locally and internationally. Through gaining work experience in Major Game contexts and by observing characteristics of leaders and followers in this context, the researcher eventually intends to develop leadership programs assisting future sport leaders entering the industry, in effort to create understanding and improve experiences with fulfillment among workers in Major Games organizations.

Theoretical Frameworks

In the sport management literature, topics of program delivery, marketing studies, and organizational behaviour have been researched over time (Zeigler, 2007). Though the

focus of sport management literature characteristically surrounds planning, strategy, leadership, promotions, consumer behaviour, finance, employee satisfaction, and customer service (Stewart, 2014), the construct of leadership is seldom applied commensurately with Major Games (i.e., mega-sporting events) contexts (Parent, Olver, & Séguin, 2009). Moreover, while leadership is often discussed in relation to organizational outcomes (i.e., turnover, task completion, work quality, goal attainment, alignment, among others), little is known regarding leader influence on perceived workplace fulfillment among employees. As such, there is a great potential to gain knowledge specifically exploring how leaders operate in the unique Major Games environment.

For the purpose of this research, leadership is defined as a process of interaction and influence, where leaders and followers share a purpose and path to jointly accomplish worthwhile goals (Patrick, 2013; Welty Peachey, Zhou, Damon & Burton, 2015). As the researcher seeks to explore the significance of authentic leadership on employees' perceived workplace fulfillment in the Major Games context, questions guiding the research include: How is the Major Games workplace described based on employees' experiences?; How do Major Game employees perceive leader qualities of the leaders they encounter in this working environment?; and How is employees' perceived workplace fulfillment positively or negatively influenced in the Major Games context, if at all?

The selected definition of leadership is purposeful, given it acknowledges that leaders and followers interact in a manner where leaders hold influence over followers (i.e., ability to influence employees' workplace experience), speaking to the researcher's

desire to explore leader impact on the development of employees' perceived workplace fulfillment.

Found to significantly influence followers' work and life quality in various capacities, leadership affects the degree to which followers experience levels of satisfaction, stress, and meaningfulness (Patrick, 2013). Authentic leaders "act in accordance with deep personal values and convictions, to build credibility and win the respect and trust of followers by encouraging diverse viewpoints and building networks of collaborative relationships" (Avolio, Gardner, Walumbwa, Luthans, & May, 2004, p. 806) and are understood as influential to followers' work and life quality, including the degree to which followers experience levels of satisfaction, stress, and meaningfulness (Patrick, 2013). Authentic leadership positively influences these employee outcomes due to such leaders acting in accordance with their deep personal values to cultivate followers' respect and trust by encouraging diverse viewpoints and collaborative relationships (Avolio et al., 2004).

As authentic leadership is a construct rooted in the notion of authenticity (i.e., "the unobstructed operation of one's true, or core, self in one's daily enterprise" [Kinsler, 2014, p. 92]), employee benefits from such leadership include: improved employee attitudes, behaviours, and outcomes; increased employee commitment, heightened creativity, enhanced psychological wellbeing, and improved self-esteem (Wang & Hsieh, 2013). As authentic leadership is associated with a leader's promotion of positivity, development of ethical organizational climates, and leader self-awareness, such leaders identify and understand employees' strengths and weaknesses, thereby allowing them to share their authentic emotions, remain true to themselves and honour internal values and

beliefs, all qualities that foster workplace spirituality and further employees' perceived workplace fulfillment (Zhou, Ma, Cheng & Xia, 2014).

Workplace spirituality is defined as “the recognition of an inner life that nourishes and is nourished by meaningful work that takes place in the context of community” (van der Walt & de Klerk, 2014, p. 381). Associated with employees' happiness, wellbeing, and fulfillment levels, workplace spirituality aids employees to feel interconnected with the world and living things, thus rendering them more satisfied and fulfilled (Pawar, 2014). Workplace spirituality furthermore allows increased productivity, creativity, and profitability levels among employees (van der Walt & de Klerk, 2014), contrary to organizations where when such spirituality is lacking, higher levels of stress-related illness, burnout, and absenteeism are noted (Suárez, 2015). Spiritual leaders (i.e., leaders characterized as supportive, altruistic, and empowering towards employees [Hunsaker, 2017]) are said to foster workplace spirituality through demonstrating increased consideration and prioritization of employees' emotions towards themselves, their work and their organization, increasing attention to employees' personal development and organizational harmony (Suárez, 2015), leading to improved employee performance. Furthermore, authentic leaders may contribute to employees' pursuit of fulfillment and actualization at work through fostering workplace spirituality, and by increasing both individual and organizational goal setting (Parent et al., 2009).

Employee Outcomes

Kenney (1998) defines employees' perceived workplace fulfillment as the degree to which employees' experience work that is emotionally, spiritually, and intellectually engaging or fulfilling. Employees' perceived workplace fulfillment involves the degree to

which they perceive they may engage their talents and abilities within organizational contexts, such that their behaviour reflects core values and employees feel they connect with others to work on worthwhile endeavours. While employees' perceived workplace fulfillment is a concept that lacks scholarly prominence in the sport management literature, it has a direct relationship with the degree to which employees expend positive energy toward their work and with the degree to which they experience stress, satisfaction and productivity (Davenport, 2015).

Though employees' perceived workplace fulfillment is a lesser-known term in the sport management literature, it is understood as difficult to both operationalize and measure in organizational contexts, given past research has typically measured fulfillment in terms of participation in sporting activities (Littlejohn, Taks, Wood, & Snelgrove, 2016), rather than in relation to the influence of leadership within Major Games contexts. While the term "wellbeing" is used more commonly to convey similar notions of fulfillment, it is understood as both a hedonic and eudaemonic variable, where hedonic or hedonism refers to one's basic desire to approach pleasure and avoid pain (Ilies, Morgeson, & Nahrgang, 2005) and eudaemonic or eudaemism speaks to being fully engaged, true to oneself, and realizing one's true potential (Ilies et al., 2005). As such, wellbeing ranges as a construct from a simplistic binary of one feeling good versus one feeling bad (i.e., hedonic) to a multi-dimensional, objective construct of one's satisfaction and mental state (i.e., eudaemonic). While employees' perceived workplace fulfillment is associated with eudaemonic characteristics, when applied to workplace contexts, employees' perceived workplace fulfillment encompasses employees' positive

emotions as a result of the work-related experiences they encounter (Rahimnia & Sharifirad, 2015).

Major Games Context

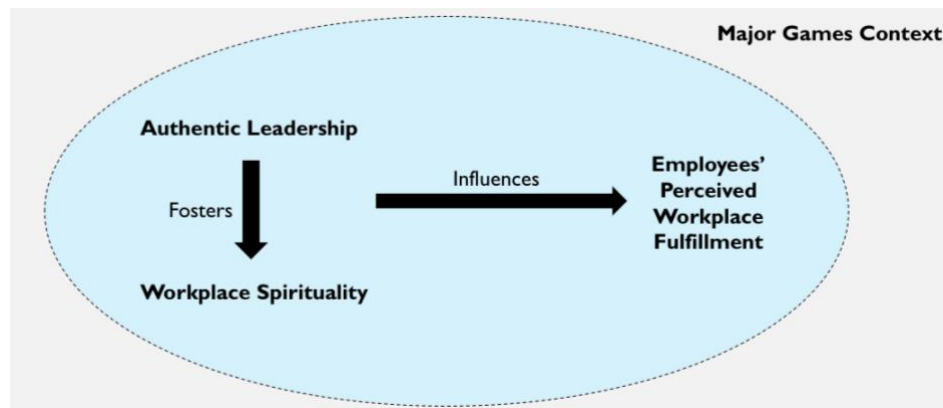
The Major Games environment is characterized by multi-sport games including, but not exclusive to, Olympic/Paralympic Games, Pan/Para Pan American Games, and Commonwealth Games. Major Games events are commonly associated with being irregular, large in size and scope, and significant for host communities and beyond (Littlejohn et al., 2016). When involving multitudes of individuals working jointly, the choice of leader (i.e., Head of Sport, Sport Operations Manager, Sport Manager) is said to be pivotal to the success of a Major Games event due to its temporary nature, where all organizational members contribute to the development of an impactful event identity that lasts for generations (Parent & Foreman, 2007), thus requiring a positive experience with leadership. Major Games environments are furthermore associated with unique organizational stressors including heavy workload, short time constraints, role ambiguity, job insecurity, and work-life conflict (Odio, Walker, & Kim, 2013), thus calling for leaders with unique skills (Parent & Séguin, 2008).

While Major Games hosting has become popularized over time due to beneficial impacts (e.g., economic, cultural, and political) on host regions and countries (Leopkey, Mutter, & Parent, 2010), little remains known regarding employees' experience with perceived workplace fulfillment in the actual Major Games work context. Moreover, though Major Games research topics are frequently explored (i.e., legacy programs, economic impact upon host communities, tourism facets) (Parent, 2008), study of employee relations, human resource management, and leadership in this particular

context is scarce (Parent et al., 2009). Given the uniqueness of the Major Games context, where employees experience complex, temporary, and high-velocity work environments, it is thus worthy to illuminate research gaps specific to leadership and employees' perceived workplace fulfillment in the Major Games environment. This area requires theoretical exploration and practical consideration, given the potential positive implications that such consideration may have on sport organizations and industry leaders.

As such, the research proposition that guides this exploration is that when characteristics of authentic leadership are present among Major Games' leaders, a climate of workplace spirituality is more likely fostered, and employees are more likely to perceive and experience workplace fulfillment while working in such event contexts, as illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Theoretical Frameworks – Hypothesis



Authentic leadership specifically is thought to benefit the Major Games industry; and, as such, this environment calls for leaders whose approach is flexible, who possess a high degree of self-awareness, and who create supportive, autonomous work environments for employees (Fletcher & Arnold, 2011; Mazerolle & Goodman, 2013).

Research Purpose & Questions

Given the paucity of research relating authentic leadership, workplace spirituality, and employees' perceived workplace fulfillment applied within the Major Games context, the purpose of this study is to explore the significance of authentic leadership and workplace spirituality on the development of employees' perceived workplace fulfillment in the Major Games context. This research is justified theoretically, as Major Games and leadership concepts are seldom applied commensurately (Parent et al., 2009) and managerially, as little is known regarding the role of human resource management and leadership concepts and outcomes in the Major Games context. Thus, exploring the significance of authentic leadership on the development of employees' perceived workplace fulfillment within the Major Games context is understood as difficult to identify.

In addition, Parent (2008) notes that though large-scale sporting events that draw global attention such as the Olympics and Paralympics, little is known about inner, managerial operations. Both popular media writers and academic researchers discuss tourism, marketing, sponsorship, economic impact, and political relations with regard to Major Games events; though management information on HR and leadership practices; employee and volunteer management; and employee relations remains scarce (Parent, 2008). While it is understood that leadership is largely impactful in all sport organizations (Welty Peachey et al., 2015), the unique factors influencing the Major Games organizational environment require increased attention, due to the nature of this inherently fast paced, ever-changing context.

Parent (2008) provides additional justification for this research, when discussing

the lack of knowledge in sport management literature regarding the specific managerial issues that Major Games' employees experience from human resource and leadership perspectives, where if issues are mismanaged, levels of employees' perceived workplace fulfillment may be influenced negatively. Human Resources (HR) refers to those persons working within organizations who individually and collectively contribute to the achievement of the organization's success (Weerakoon, 2016). Such individuals include employees, volunteers and clients (Chelladurai, 2006). Where HR refers to organizational constituents, Human Resource Management (HRM) signifies the process of creating value while managing organizational elements, including employee recruitment, selection, retention and replacement, orientation, training and development, and appraisal and rewards (Weerakoon, 2016). Though HRM practices have developed the past 30 years (Chen & Wang, 2014), the HRM practices in the sport industry—and by extension, the Major Games industry—remains an area requiring further development and examination (Parent, 2008).

Chelladurai (2006) notes that for leaders to comprehensively manage organizational HR, they must acknowledge differences among organizational constituents (i.e., abilities, personalities, values, motivations), while accordingly recruiting, retaining, growing, developing, and leading varying organizational members. Furthermore, leaders must adopt HRM practices that foster employee commitment and satisfaction by means of organizational justice, specific job design, career consideration, leadership, performance appraisal, reward systems, and internal marketing strategies. Given these theoretical and managerial justifications, the researcher proposes that when characteristics of authentic leadership are present among Major Games' leaders,

workplace spirituality is more likely fostered, and employees will more likely to perceive and experience workplace fulfillment. Therefore, the following research questions are aligned with the study's purpose and guide its fulfilment, including:

- 1) How is the Major Games workplace described based on employees' experiences?
- 2) How do Major Game employees perceive leader qualities of the leaders they encounter in this working environment?
- 3) How is employees' perceived workplace fulfillment positively or negatively influenced in the Major Games context, if at all?

To examine and answer these research questions, a qualitative research design was applied through use of a phenomenographical methodology, whereby participants previously employed in one or more Major Games events, from 2010 to the present time were recruited to share their perspectives. Specifically, the author utilized purposive, homogeneous sampling to recruit a maximum of 20 employees of Manager and Coordinator level positions of sport related functional areas (i.e., specific sports, medal ceremonies, venue management, accreditation, etc.) to participate in the current study. Primary data were collected through the use of a semi-structured interview, where the researcher requested consent from invited participants to record interviews, which were later transcribed verbatim. The researcher uploaded these collected data to the Nvivo computer software program to utilize open coding and thematic data analyses to discover emergent themes to help answer the research questions.

While research findings will contribute new theoretical understanding in the field by illuminating current research gaps and discussing the value of increasing Major Games' employees perceived workplace fulfillment, the researcher's overarching

intention through conducting this study was to provide salient recommendations for leaders of Major Games' contexts through a thorough analysis and discussion of research findings. As such, the researcher offers recommendations for leaders to develop themselves toward adopting authentic leadership behaviours, such that the promotion and development of a culture of workplace fulfillment may be possible among Major Games' employees.

Through the following chapters, topics relevant to this study are discussed in further depth, and subsequently applied within the proposed research study. In Chapter II, through a review of literature, the theoretical and conceptual frameworks applied to the purpose of this study are explored, while in Chapter III the selected methodology and research design are detailed as are procedures implemented to gather and analyze data related to how the research study was executed, including site selection, participant selection, data collection, analysis, and interpretation. In Chapter IV, research findings are detailed including participant quotes to gain insight into the employee experience within the Major Games work context, while in Chapter V, the researcher further discusses the implications of participant experiences in light of relevant literature, toward increased understanding. In Chapter VI, the researcher draws conclusions regarding results of the study, and offers recommendations and future research directions.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this chapter is to expand upon relevant constructs and theories associated with the research purpose and questions. Given that the hypothesis associated with this research is that characteristics of authentic leadership foster workplace spirituality, which in turn aids in the development of employees' perceived workplace fulfillment all in the context of the Major Games environment, this purpose be fulfilled by presenting themes from current literature and highlighting trends and issues, while applying the research purpose and questions to the literature. Throughout the following review of literature, the construct of leadership is first discussed, through its history, evolution, and representation within the sport management literature.

Second, authentic leadership is detailed as to the role such a construct serves particular to the sport industry, where proposed outcomes associated with the construct (i.e., including workplace spirituality, satisfaction, wellbeing, happiness, and fulfillment) are examined as valuable to Major Games organizations and beyond. To follow, qualities that may be experienced among organizations where authentic leadership and workplace spirituality are not reported are detailed, including employee dissatisfaction and conflict. Each of these constructs are framed within the unique context of the Major Games industry, with mention to the impact of generational differences on the successful management of Major Games organizations.

Leadership

Leadership is a construct defined for the purpose of this study as a process of interaction and influence, where leaders and followers share a purpose and path to jointly

accomplish worthwhile goals (Patrick, 2013; Welty Peachey et al., 2015). Developed over time, dating back to Western European philosophers who evaluated leadership in cultural contexts (Welty Peachey et al., 2015), leadership as a construct encompasses a multitude of perspectives, constituting a rich area of interest that continues to evolve and shift with time (Welty Peachey et al., 2015). Notwithstanding style, leadership is suggested to be a dynamic process that varies from situation to situation, embodying a construct that has many variables affecting individuals' effective demonstration (Hur, 2008). Thought to be a centerpiece for an organization's journey from good to great (Collins, 2005; Lawson, 2014), effective leadership is associated with a many benefits experienced by organizations and employees alike.

Gaining researcher interest in the field of sport management since the early 1970s (Welty Peachey et al., 2015), leadership in sport contexts is typically associated with on-field athletic or coaching performance (i.e., related to points scored, team cohesion), while leadership related to the sport management context highlights off-field performances, such as those found in sport organizational contexts themselves (Welty Peachey et al., 2015). Where many leadership styles have emerged over time, certain styles of leadership foster considerate, employee-centered environments, while others prefer structured, task-oriented workplaces (Hur, 2008). According to Welty Peachey et al.'s (2015), leadership research in the sport management literature typically surrounds five styles of leadership, including: democratic leadership (i.e., subordinate participation in decision-making is honoured); autocratic leadership (i.e., employee-leader equality is discouraged); laissez-faire leadership (i.e., hands-off delegation is utilized); transactional leadership (i.e., leader-follower exchange relationship); and transformational leadership

(i.e., leader fostering follower development). Among these five styles, Welty Peachey et al. (2015) offer that the most prominent style of leadership researched in the sport management literature surrounds transformational leadership.

Gaining prominence in sport management research during the mid-1990s (Welty Peachey et al., 2015), transformational leadership is described as the leader's interest on followers' development, where such leaders encourage followers to maximize their potential in pursuit of higher needs (i.e., self-actualization), while maintaining organizational goal attainment (Welty Peachey et al., 2015). Through time, leadership has been understood as a critically important skill that managers may use to inspire and stimulate others to achieve worthwhile goals (Patrick, 2013). As such, sport management researchers have focused efforts to study transformational leadership, widely considered as an effective style of leadership among sport management practitioners (Welty Peachey et al., 2015).

Where transformational leadership has often been associated with the measure of employee satisfaction, remaining one of the most frequently measured indicators of leader impact (Wallace & Weese, 1995), leadership in sport management requires continued exploration by researchers toward further understanding and development (Welty Peachey et al., 2015). Various leadership themes have emerged in the sport management literature following notions of transformational leadership, including both ethical leadership and servant leadership frameworks. While ethical leadership argues for the importance of ethical actions, where social and moral responsibility are prioritized in the sport context, servant leadership prioritizes leader focus on employee development, rather than on attaining organizational objectives (Welty Peachey et al., 2015). Where

servant leadership details six conceptual dimensions of the construct (i.e., empowering and developing people, humility, authenticity, interpersonal acceptance, providing direction and stewardship), leader emotional intelligence is furthermore thought to be impactful to employee workplace experience through demonstration of positive emotions, fostering positive emotions among employees (Welty Peachey et al., 2015).

Authentic Leadership

A leadership construct that seems to meld the servant leadership dimension of authenticity and the positive emotion generation of emotionally intelligent leaders, authentic leadership – a practice where leaders “act in accordance with deep personal values and convictions, to build credibility and win the respect and trust of followers by encouraging diverse viewpoints and building networks of collaborative relationships” (Avolio et al., 2004) – is associated with leaders who create free, autonomous, interdependent work climates perpetuating meaningful and innovative workplace behaviours (Patrick, 2013). Pairing the concept of authenticity (i.e., “the unobstructed operation of one’s true, or core, self in one’s daily enterprise” [Kinsler, 2014, p. 92]), with leadership, authentic leadership is described as aligning with employee needs, as employees today are said to increasingly prefer leaders who lend attention to individual performance, satisfaction, and stress, stemming from genuine, value-based leadership strategies (Zhou et al., 2014).

Wang and Hsieh (2013) note that authentic leadership cultivates positive leadership outcomes by acknowledging organizational and societal issues as part of its process. As authentic leadership is centralized around leaders’ promotion of positivity and strong ethical climates, employees’ self-awareness and internalized morale may be

nourished (Wang & Hsieh, 2013). Additionally, remaining true to oneself along with honouring internal values and beliefs is furthermore embedded in the authentic leadership practice (Zhou et al., 2014). With the values of authentic leadership, authentic leaders themselves must demonstrate high levels of integrity and self-awareness to gain employee respect and influence employee development (Wang & Hsieh, 2013; Zhou et al., 2014).

Rahimnia & Sharifirad (2015) note that authentic leaders are characterized as confident, hopeful, optimistic, resilient, moral, ethical, future oriented, true to themselves and prioritize the development of employee leadership. Authentic leaders require self-awareness to identify and understand employees' strengths, weaknesses, and emotions (Zhou et al., 2014), while simultaneously fostering transparent leader–employee relationships such that the sharing of authentic emotions is encouraged (Zhou et al., 2014). The constant interaction and emotional support that authentic leaders cultivate allows for increased commitment from employees, where leaders nurture positive emotion generation while simultaneously managing negative employee emotions.

As sport management literature eludes, authentic leadership is associated with organizational and individual (employee) benefits, including improved employee attitudes, behaviours, and outcomes; increased employee commitment, heightened creativity, enhanced psychological wellbeing, and improved self-esteem (Wang & Hsieh, 2013). Despite its positive associations with leading and developing new leaders, many scholars have challenged the notions surrounding authentic leadership as problematic, particularly when posing questions such as “Authentic to whom?”; “Authentic for what end?”; and “Authentic in what context?” (Storberg-Walker & Gardiner, 2017). As

Gardiner (2011) critiques, proponents of the authentic leadership framework assume that individuals are able to know themselves wholly and authentically, however, fails to account for the development of authenticity as dependent upon individual awareness and rational thinking regarding who we are and how we act (Hanold, 2017). Further, given the inherent difference between how we appear to others and the way in which we view ourselves, Hanold (2017) suggests that true authenticity lays between how we view ourselves and how others view ourselves, and thus individuals must collaborate with others for true authenticity to be found. As such, authenticity is argued to be a multifaceted construct that represents different things to different people based upon their own specific situations (Storberg-Walker & Gardiner, 2017).

Gardiner (2011) additionally points to this lack of consideration towards social and historical predispositions as influential to one's authenticity, where authenticity is socially constructed (Lui, Cutcher, & Grant, 2015) and manifests differently based upon each individuals' experiences, perceptions, and position (e.g., spatial, temporal, power, and privilege). Power and privilege further ground Hanold's (2017) critique of the authentic leadership framework, where the notion that the authentic leader is all-knowing in fact contradicts the relationships that the authentic leadership framework is said to perpetuate. When authentic leaders are positioned as all-knowing, opportunity for collaboration and sharing are limited, thus dismantling the very aims that such a construct seeks to achieve (i.e., leaders prioritizing diverse viewpoints and collaborative relationships. As such, the authentic leadership framework is criticized as harbouring of theoretical assumptions and misaligned values when compared to the proposed underpinnings of the construct (Hanold, 2017).

Finally, authentic leadership is criticized on an existential basis, where authenticity is interpreted by existentialists as a “process of striving to realize one’s consciousness” (Lui et al., 2015, p. 238) or a process of becoming, rather than something to achieve or attain. Despite these critiques, authentic leadership is a framework said to be well-suited for dealing with rapid change among organizations (Avolio and Gardner, 2005), an element beneficial to the ever-changing Major Games context. Moreover, as authentic leadership fosters employees’ leadership growth and workplace engagement due to its nurturing of sincere and supported work environments (Wang & Hsieh, 2013; Kinsler, 2014; Rahimnia & Sharifirad, 2015), workplace spirituality may be fostered, thereby lending to the development of employees’ perceived workplace fulfillment.

Authentic Leadership fostering Workplace Spirituality

Workplace spirituality, a recent addition to management and leadership literatures (Suárez, 2015), is defined as “the recognition of an inner life that nourishes and is nourished by meaningful work that takes place in the context of community” (van der Walt & de Klerk, 2014, p. 381). Noted as an impactful movement in organizational literature (Pawar, 2014) the construct considers and prioritizes employee emotion towards themselves, their work and their organization, associating personal development with organizational harmony (Suárez, 2015). Though topics of workplace behaviours have been previously been measured through the study of employee physical (absenteeism) and psychological (satisfaction) dimensions, research on a third (spiritual) dimension remains largely absent in organizational and management literature (van der Walt & de Klerk, 2014).

van der Walt and de Klerk (2014) discuss the emerging importance of workplace spirituality to leaders and their organizational employees, where past work structures and policies seem no longer appropriate when seeking to maximize employee potential as compartmentalized work cultures are said to negatively influence employees. By introducing the practice of spirituality into the workplace, organizations are able to increase meaning in employees' lives, both personal and work related (van der Walt & de Klerk, 2014). Where organizations requiring workplace spirituality report employee stress-related illness, burnout, absenteeism, and corruption, organizations fostering workplace spirituality experience improved employee productivity, creativity, fulfillment, value congruence, work quality, and profitability (van der Walt & de Klerk, 2014; Suárez, 2015).

The workplace is noted as central to employees' lives, often being reported as the "primary social institution where meaning and purpose in living is found" (van der Walt & de Klerk, 2014, p. 383). As such, meaning is largely achieved through work, thus demonstrating the value of workplace spirituality and the construct's inherent benefits to organizations. Positive individual outcomes associated with workplace spirituality include: life satisfaction, subjective wellbeing, happiness, and success (van der Walt & de Klerk, 2014), benefitting the contemporary employee who is said to seek a spiritual basis to work, contrary to a previous precedence of materialistic gains (van der Walt & de Klerk, 2014). As meaningful work is said to increasingly effect the development and attainment of a meaningful life (van der Walt & de Klerk, 2014), Suárez (2015) states that employees are searching for true meaning at work, transcending their humanity by acknowledging, feeding, and integrating their spirit (i.e., spirituality) at work.

Authentic Leadership developing Employee Satisfaction

While employees are increasingly craving work that impacts themselves and the world in a positive manner (van der Walt & de Klerk, 2014), leaders play a pivotal role in the establishment of cultures of workplace spirituality among organizations. Through qualities of authentic leadership, such as authentic employee emotions and supportive workplace environments, workplace spirituality is fostered, aiding in the development of employees' perceived workplace fulfillment through qualities such as employee satisfaction, wellbeing, and happiness related to workplace contexts. Employee satisfaction is defined as a pleasurable condition resulting from how one appraises workplace experiences versus personal needs, values, and expectations (Challduri, 2006). Understood as a crucial factor for organizations and their managers to consider, employee satisfaction is noted as having direct implications on employee performance and work outcomes (Wu & Wu, 2011). Given that employee satisfaction is positively related to employee performance (Wu & Wu, 2011), researchers postulate that employees' preferred leadership style influences leader effectiveness, and thereby workplace satisfaction (Patrick, 2013; Singer & Singer, 1989).

Level of employee satisfaction may further be influenced by employee motivations in workplace contexts. Challduri (2006) states that both intrinsic and extrinsic motivations influence employee attitudes towards work, where extrinsic motivations may include salary or opportunities for promotion, while intrinsic motivations include overcoming a challenging task, or helping others (Challduri, 2006). It is suggested that intrinsic motivations and rewards residing within jobs lead to job enrichment experienced by employees (Challduri, 2006).

As such, leaders who remain attuned to employee motivations and attempt to create rewards that compliment employee values (e.g., monetary bonuses, or personal development) aids not only in the establishment of employee satisfaction, but further job enrichment (Challduri, 2006) and employees' perceived workplace fulfillment. To be an effective leader in today's business climate, one must be a visionary, future minded, and allow for employee empowerment and autonomy, as these behaviours lead to improved employee productivity and long-term performance (Patrick, 2013). Such requirements of industry leaders are pivotal to the development and maintenance of employee satisfaction, both towards leaders and organizations at large.

Wellbeing and Happiness

Qualities required to service employee satisfaction at work furthermore align with those said to foster employee wellbeing and happiness in the workplace. While wellbeing, happiness, and fulfillment are all constructs displaying similar characteristics, wellbeing serves as the construct most represented throughout sport management and organizational literatures. Understood as difficult constructs to both operationalize and measure in organizational contexts, wellbeing and happiness in sport are typically measured in relation to participation in sporting activities (Littlejohn et al., 2016). The constructs have been primarily represented in psychology literatures, more recently being applied to organizational contexts.

Wellbeing is described as ranging from the association of one's feeling good versus feeling bad to a multi-construct objectivity of one's satisfaction and mental state (Rahimnia & Sharifirad, 2015), or "a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experiences" (p. 364) when applied to employees'

workplace experience. Employees' experience of happiness in relation to work is said to influence factors including: orientation towards work and interest in work; persistence through difficulties; and productivity levels, all of which are particularly evident when compared to employees' experience of unhappiness.

Establishing wellbeing and happiness at work is subjective to individual employees, where their psychological connection to work tasks impacts organizational performance, and subjective experience is improved when employees' needs are met (Bakker & Oerlemans, 2016). Happiness and wellbeing experiences for employees have garnished much attention in psychology research, as they are said to be fostered in the workplace through application of positive psychology (Seligman, 2002). Positive psychology promotes individuals to not only improve upon their negative qualities, but also to build upon existing positive ones (Park, 2015).

Characteristics of positive psychology are apparent in authentic leadership practices, where positive psychological capacities including: confidence, optimism, hope, and resiliency contribute to authentic leaders influencing desirable organizational outcomes, such as improved employee wellbeing, happiness, and fulfillment (Avolio & Gardner, 2005). As the positive psychology construct strives to consider all aspects of human behaviour and needs, five pillars are acknowledged as helping to accomplish the feat, including: feeling positive emotions (e.g., happiness and satisfaction); engagement, or being absorbed in activities; relationships, whereby one is authentically connected to people; meaning, or feeling of purpose – often framed within spirituality; and achievement towards one's pursuits (Park, 2015).

Wellbeing and happiness have a positive influence on employees' perceived

workplace fulfillment, which has a direct relationship on the degree to which employees expend positive energy toward their work, along with decreased levels of employee stress and increased levels of both employee satisfaction and productivity (Davenport, 2015). Authentic leadership is associated with increased reports of wellbeing among both an organization's employees and leaders (Rahimnia & Sharifirad, 2015) when fostered through authentic behaviours (i.e., organizational members acting "true" to themselves [Avolio & Gardner, 2005]), furthermore influencing level of employees' perceived workplace fulfillment.

Employees' Perceived Workplace Fulfillment

Most people want more from work than to just make a living. Truly satisfying work is emotionally, spiritually, and intellectually engaging. It uses your talents and abilities, reflects your core values, and connects you with others in a worthwhile endeavour. It provides you with a sense of pride in your efforts and recognition from others. (Kenney, 1998, p. 44).

Where workplace spirituality centralizes on a nourished life through work, employees' perceived workplace fulfillment is associated with qualities such as employees' positive energy in the workplace, decreased stress levels, improved employee satisfaction, and increased productivity (Davenport, 2015). Organizations that prioritize employees' perceived workplace fulfillment facilitate environments that promote individuals' work assigned based on their abilities and aspirations, social support to improve productivity, and task autonomy towards decreasing task related stress (Davenport, 2015). Additionally, when employees are fulfilled they are noted as producing more while being absent less (Suárez, 2015). Conversely, when organizations

and leaders cannot foster employee fulfillment, prosperous, and sustainable organizations are more difficult to establish (Davenport, 2015).

Leadership plays a pivotal role in employee attainment of workplace fulfillment, as it has the potential to influence their intrinsic motivation through empowering practices (Wu & Chen, 2015). Where autonomy has become an increasingly important quality for employees to experience at work, empowering leadership methods that foster increased power distribution to employees are well received, improving levels of self-management (Wu & Chen, 2015). Specifically, through application of authentic leadership practices, leaders assist employees in finding meaning and connection in work contexts (Avolio & Gardner, 2005), positively fostering workplace spirituality and thereby influencing the development of employees' perceived workplace fulfillment. As authentic leaders foster workplace environments of self-awareness, optimism, confidence, hope, transparent relationships, trust, commitment, inclusion, and positive ethical climates for both leaders and employees (Avolio & Gardner, 2005), workplace spirituality may become present, thereby positively influencing the development of employees' perceived workplace fulfillment.

Role of Dissatisfaction and Conflict

While the hypothesis of this study argues that qualities of authentic leadership foster workplace spirituality, assisting in the development of employee satisfaction, wellbeing and happiness leading towards employees' perceived workplace fulfillment, organizational leaders must take measures to address employee dissatisfaction in the workplace beyond monetary compensation methods (van der Walt & de Klerk, 2014), particularly given employees' increasing demand for meaningful work. When employee

satisfaction lacks, organizational leaders are likely to experience various organizational difficulties including employee stressors leading to job dissatisfaction. Though job dissatisfaction may bode detrimental to organizational success and the development of employees' perceived workplace fulfillment, practices of authentic leadership may assist in remedying organizational challenges experienced. However, when qualities of authentic leadership fail to be present in the workplace, employee dissatisfaction is more likely to occur, further leading to experiences of conflict in the workplace.

Despite negative connotations, conflict is a phenomenon associated with positive impacts when managed effectively; however is linked to negative ramifications failing appropriate management (Hamm-Kerwin & Doherty, 2010). While researchers recognize various types of conflict, the two most prevalent forms include cognitive (task) conflict, and social (relationship) conflict. While cognitive conflict is commonly associated with positive group performance (i.e., decision quality), social conflict is associated with negative performance, influencing qualities such as employee satisfaction and employee organizational commitment (Hamm-Kerwin & Doherty, 2010). When lower levels of employee commitment and satisfaction are experienced, decreased employee performance results, centralizing conflict as an area of interest for organizational leaders (Hamm-Kerwin & Doherty, 2010). In sport, where conflict may appear at either of the individual, group, or organizational levels, social (relationship) conflict is said to have the greatest influence on employee satisfaction, commitment (Hamm-Kerwin & Doherty, 2010), and performance levels (Mellalieu, Shearer & Shearer, 2013).

While social (relationship) conflict is associated with potential negative organizational implications, this type of conflict also allows for growth opportunities,

including conflict management, self-awareness, and social skills (Mellalieu et al., 2013). Authentic leadership practices may further allow for growth opportunities from situations of conflict, as self-awareness and self-regulation are fostered, creating environments of positive development (Walumbwa, Avolio, Gardner, Wernsing, & Peterson, 2008). Furthermore, though there are many challenges associated with dissatisfaction in today's workplace, researchers have theorized that potential responses to this issue include: task variety, given its association with improved creativity and enhanced meaningfulness for employees (Bos, Donders, Schoutenten & Gulden, 2013); an environment of sharing, through integrating various methods of thinking, talking, and working, to improve synergy among employees (Maier, 2011); and increased support and useful feedback (e.g., emphasizing positive attributes, such as creativity) to mediate employee dissatisfaction (Patrick, 2013) and experiences of workplace conflict.

Leadership and the Major Games Context

Though the hypothesis of this study and topics discussed throughout this literature review are relevant in all organizational settings, the specific context of this study is that of the Major Games environment. The Major Games environment serves as a uniquely interesting case to apply the research topic, given various organizational elements that, when combined, differentiate Major Games' entities from other sport organizations. Firstly, the Major Games context is understood as unique due to events being irregular, one-off, large in scope events, that are significant for host communities and beyond (Littlejohn et al., 2016).

As Major Games hosting has become popularized over time, Leopkey et al. (2010) note that beneficial impacts are experienced by host regions and countries,

including economic, cultural, and political impacts. Cities, regions, and nations remain motivated to bid for Major Games events given their association with sport tourism, urban regeneration, increased awareness of destination, return on investment and material or immaterial legacies (Leopkey et al., 2010). While Parent (2016) additionally notes that the planning and hosting of a Major Games event is complex, multi-level, and multi-sectoral, involving multitudes of individuals working jointly, research linking leadership practices to the management of mega-sporting events has seldom been explored (Parent et al., 2009). As such, the presence of authentic leadership fostering workplace spirituality, and further employees' perceived workplace fulfillment remains unknown in this particular context.

The Major Games environment is additionally said to be unique in nature due to its temporary, high velocity environments that are extremely susceptible to change (Parent et al., 2009). While sport management literature examining details leadership by coaches, athletic directors, and boards of directors (Parent & Séguin, 2008), Parent et al. (2009) discuss, the choice of leaders is pivotal to the success of hosting a Major Games event due to situational variables that impact leader-employee affairs. Such variables include the temporary nature of the entity, where all members of the organization contribute to the development of event identity that lasts for generations (Parent & Foreman, 2007).

While Major Games contexts are thirdly reported as unique due to employees' experience with organizational stressors including: workload, time constraints, role stressors, job insecurity, and work-life conflict (Odio, Walker, & Kim, 2013), characteristics such as those of professional sport event managers are required of Major

Games leaders given the complex organizational environment (Parent & Séguin, 2008).

As such, the Major Games context may best suit leaders who are flexible in their approach, where increased consideration to employees regarding goals is fostered.

Specifically, a leader's management style that promotes autonomy among employees, development of a supportive work environment, and construction of flexible work schedules aid in the establishment of work-life balance, and positively contributes to employees' development of work-related satisfaction and fulfillment (Mazerolle & Goodman, 2013). Moreover, through qualities including leader honesty, self-insight, emotional intelligence, ability to generate enthusiasm, cooperation, and trust, leaders – specifically authentic leaders – may improve his or her effectiveness where cultures of openness, sensitivity, and empowerment are fostered, furthermore impacting the development of employees' perceived workplace fulfillment in the Major Games industry (Fletcher & Arnold, 2011).

Authentic Leadership for Generational Differences

Such style of leadership (authentic leadership) may furthermore positively influence the diverse generations that are currently present in organizations. Gaining interest in various industries, management must consider leadership strategies tailored to different generational employees, given more generations than ever before are simultaneously working alongside one another. A generation, typically defined through shared experiences, culture, and collective memory over a finite period of time, shares unique and differing experiences (Arsenault, 2004). As such, generations represent an important element for organizational leaders to acknowledge due to the influence of generational experiences on the development of individual personality, capacities, and

behaviours (Kellison, Kim, & Magnusen, 2013), all of which become present in the workplace. As such, it is pivotal for leaders to honour the needs of individuals from differing generations, or cross-generational individuals, to limit misunderstandings that may impede both individual and organizational success (Arsenault, 2004; Gibson, Greenwood, & Murphy, 2008; Sandberg & Warner, 2010).

In the literature, four generations with birth years ranging 1922 to 2000 are typically highlighted. These generations include: 1) the Veterans, or Traditionalists, born between the years of 1922-1943, and known to value dedication, hard work, and respect for authority; 2) the Baby Boomer generation, born between 1944-1960, where these individuals characteristically value optimism, personal gratification, and growth, and are noted as being highly driven in work contexts; 3) Generation X includes individuals born between 1961-1980 where such individuals commonly value diversity, technoliteracy, fun, and informality and workplace independence (Sandberg & Warner, 2010).

The final generation represented in the literature is Generation Y, also known as Nexters or Millennials. Millennials, as they will be referred to for the purpose of this research, are individuals born between the years of 1981-2000, who value optimism, confidence, and achievement. The Millennial generation specifically is noted as the fastest growing and most diverse generation in history to enter the workforce (Kellison et al., 2013), making them of particular interest to organizational leaders. Regarding Millennials, leaders are specifically tasked with managing qualities inherent to the sport industry – including long hours and low salary positions – with characteristics exclusive to the Millennial generation including: pampered, self-focused, extrinsically centered motivations (Kellison et al., 2013).

In recent years, research and popular media accounts are often polarized regarding the Millennial generation, and include generalizations that Millennials are often entitled, lazy and fear failure. With such characteristics, the popular thought is that industries must prepare to manage the needs of incoming employees. Though sentiments remain largely negative towards the Millennial generation, researchers argue that Millennials have more to offer organizations than what is commonly perceived.

Fallon's (2009) study of organizational retention and motivation of Millennial employees highlights management strategies, including: allowing employee ownership, giving feedback, emphasizing the "big picture", encouraging employees to "do good" in the world through their work, and building enjoyment into the workplace to mediate "negative" characteristics of the generation. Putre (2013) further recommends organizations become accustomed to structuring work to involve increased collaboration, relaxed rules fostering autonomy, and increased face-to-face conversations, along with improved schedule flexibility, opportunity for sabbaticals and phased retirement, to benefit the employee by mediating generation specific needs and desires, thereby benefitting organizations (Putre, 2013). Organizations may additionally seek to create supportive work environments, as they are servicing the workforce's most generationally diverse employee population to date (Maier, 2011), where motivations and rewards systems are correspondingly diverse.

With such considerations, leadership strategies, specifically those of authentic leaders, may serve as effective responses to Millennial employee needs, along with the needs of other active generations in the workplace, given its prioritization of individual employees' strengths, weaknesses, leadership development and authentic emotions (Zhou

et al., 2014). Where employees of differing generations place value in different characteristics of the workplace, generational differences and needs are important to consider and manage by organizational leaders.

Specifically, given that the Millennial generation is double the size of Generation X, organizational leaders must acknowledge the need of management prioritizing Millennial values – including employees' perceived workplace fulfillment – achieved through application of authentic leadership practices, fostering the development of workplace spirituality, further employees' perceived workplace fulfillment to benefit the unique Major Games context, and the wider sport industry.

Conclusion

Where work constitutes a prominent role in employees' lives, both inside and outside of the physical workplace, such considerations have previously garnished little attention in the Major Games context, particularly relating the role of leaders situated in this environment to employees' experience of workplace fulfillment. Noted by Parent et al. (2009), research detailing leadership practices, including authentic leadership, in the Major Games context remains scarce, calling for exploration into the impact of Major Games' leaders on reports of employee stress, productivity, creativity, satisfaction and fulfillment. This relationship holds particular significance in the Major Games industry, given the unique environmental factors impacting both leaders and employees operating within that context experiencing rare stressors that require increased management and understanding. As such, literature and constructs detailed through this review are critically important to this research, given the need for increased knowledge and understanding regarding the creation of a spiritual, fulfilling work experience for Major

Games employees fostered by leaders, allowing for fulfilled and satisfied lives experienced outside of work contexts for employees.

While the purpose of this study is to explore the significance of authentic leadership and workplace spirituality on the development of employees' perceived workplace fulfillment in the Major Games context, the hypothesis remains that when characteristics of authentic leadership are present, workplace spirituality may be fostered, positively influencing the development of employees' perceived workplace fulfillment. In discussing topics of leadership, authentic leadership, workplace spirituality, employee satisfaction, wellbeing and happiness, and the positive associations of experiencing fulfillment in the workplace context were noted. Contrasting outcomes including employee dissatisfaction and conflict when qualities of authentic leadership and workplace spirituality are not present solidified the purpose of this research as significant sport organizations and beyond. Specific to the unique Major Games work environment, characteristics of authentic leadership, workplace spirituality, and employees' perceived workplace fulfillment were furthermore applied, demonstrating their particular importance to the success of Major Games events.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study is to explore the significance of authentic leadership and workplace spirituality on the development of employees' perceived workplace fulfillment in the Major Games context. Research questions for this study include: 1) how is the Major Games workplace described based on employees' experiences?; 2) how do Major Game employees perceive leader qualities of the leaders they encounter in this working environment?; and 3) how is employees' perceived workplace fulfillment positively or negatively influenced in the Major Games context, if at all?. Through an exploration of this topic, the researcher seeks to uncover implications, and provide recommendations to Major Games' leaders regarding the role of leadership on the development of employees' perceived workplace fulfillment – and its benefits – in this unique sport organizational context.

Throughout this chapter, the methodology used to fulfill the study's purpose will be discussed, specific to details including: the application of social science research to the study; the researcher's paradigm from which she derived this project; researcher reflexivity; the theoretical frameworks that guided this study; and the research design selected. Specific to the research design, details regarding the research site selection, participant recruitment, ethical implications to the study, and all data collection and analyses strategies used in the study will be discussed.

Qualitative Research Design

Qualitative research is considered for the purpose of the current study as “a form of social inquiry that focuses on the way people interpret and make sense of their

experiences and the world in which they live” (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013, p. 11).

Qualitative research design has become prominent in social science research, appearing in disciplines including sociology, psychology, anthropology, education, business, and health (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013). Qualitative research strives to identify the “why” as opposed to the “what” of social issues, allowing for discovery of deeper insights into specific phenomena (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013). As such, use of a qualitative research design aligns with the purpose of this study as the researcher seeks to explore the specific phenomena of employees’ experience with fulfillment within the Major Games industry, and postulate as to why such experiences are so.

Research Paradigm: Constructivism

As the nature of qualitative research is social, attention given to research paradigms assists researchers in understanding the relationship between their inherent worldviews, the study, and the research process itself (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013). By identifying a paradigm matching one’s worldview or belief systems, the researcher may gain reflexive insight into the role of his or her individual perspectives and philosophies throughout the research process (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013).

As such, the researcher of the current study found herself guided by the philosophical paradigm of constructivism, one based on the central premise that individuals create their own reality (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013). The constructivist paradigm holds that knowledge does not exist independently of the learner; rather, the learner constructs reality personal to him or herself (Vrasidas, 2000). One seeing the world from the constructivist approach seeks to understand boundaries set on human experience by the “real world”, while honouring the existence of multiple realities

contributing to individual experience of reality, which is a local measure (Vrasidas, 2000). Individuals construct their own “real world” through an interaction of their thinking and direct experience, whereby they undergo an interpretive process. Human thought is said to be imaginative, which may develop through one's perceptions, sensory experiences, and social interactions. As such, one's development of meaning is noted as an interpretive process impacted by individual experiences and understanding between self, others, and the environment (Vrasidas, 2000).

As the researcher's worldview is guided by this philosophical stance, her use of constructivism helped to guide the development of current study, specific to how the researcher conceptualized and carried out the research process. All findings were affected by elements of participants' subjectivity, given each participant's view of the world and unique interpretation of his or her own life events, commensurate to how the researcher interpreted shared information, based upon her subjective experiences and perceptions, similar to most qualitative research studies. Specifically, research questions were structured to purposely reflect the researcher's constructivist paradigm by remaining open ended in nature with concise wording, such that a clear understanding of the research questions may be grasped by participants, while nonetheless allowing space for participant experiences and predispositions to influence their responses.

Reflexivity

As an element of subjectivity is inherent among qualitative research methodologies, reflexivity becomes an important consideration. Defined by Savin-Baden and Major (2013) as the process researchers take to consider their position and influence during the study, reflexivity involves the researcher introspectively identifying his or her

role in the research, recognizing how various experiences and perceptions incurred may impact the study through unintended subjectivity and bias.

As a graduate of Brock University's BSM program, the researcher has an extensive understanding of leadership and management topics in the sport industry, having had a course of study in Organizational Behaviour, Human Resources Management, and Leadership. The researcher additionally possesses both theoretical and practical understanding of the event management and Major Games industries through such experiences in planning and executing elements of Major Games, including: the Samoa 2015 Commonwealth Youth Games; the Rio 2016 Summer Olympic Games; the Toronto 2017 North American Indigenous Games; and the Anaheim 2017 IWF Weightlifting World Championships. Being privy to unique insights, knowledge, and experiences of the Major Games and wider sport industry is an important aspect for the researcher to disclose so as to remain transparent, given such experiences contribute to the researcher's impetus for exploring this particular research topic. Furthermore, said experiences influenced the participant recruitment process (i.e., participants recruited from the researcher's network) along with the manner by which the researcher received and interpreted the data.

Theoretical Framework

To frame this study, three theoretical frameworks were used to represent pillars supporting the research purpose and questions. Specifically, authentic leadership, workplace spirituality, and employees' perceived workplace fulfillment served as three guiding constructs for the research. While it is proposed that authentic leadership involves leaders who "act in accordance with deep personal values and convictions, to

build credibility and win the respect and trust of followers by encouraging diverse viewpoints and building networks of collaborative relationships” (Avolio et al., 2004, p. 308), authentic leadership focuses on the leader's own positive psychological capacities and strong ethic; and in turn, how he or she nourishes self-awareness and internalized morale among employees (Wang & Hsieh, 2013). This kind of leadership is hypothesized through this study to influence the fostering of workplace spirituality.

Workplace spirituality is defined by van der Walt & de Klerk (2014) as “the recognition of an inner life that nourishes and is nourished by meaningful work that takes place in the context of community” (p. 381) and is associated with employees’ improved fulfillment, decreased stress, improved mental and physical health, decreased absenteeism, and increased productivity in comparison to organizations where the construct is absent (Suárez, 2015). Workplace spirituality is thus theorized to assist in the development of employees’ perceived workplace fulfillment through creating a collaborative environment where employees may find meaning and purpose.

Employees’ perceived workplace fulfillment speaks to an eudaemonic perspective of one being fully engaged, true to oneself, and realizing one’s true potential (Ilies et al., 2005), thus making it of specific interest in relation to the relatively unknown relationship between authentic leadership and the unique Major Games work environment. Associated with qualities such as positive energy in the workplace, decreased employee stress, improved employee satisfaction, and increased employee productivity (Davenport, 2015), employees’ perceived workplace fulfillment is noted as a beneficial element for organizational leaders to foster, particularly in contexts such as Major Games, where

unique organizational stressors (i.e., workload, time constraints, role ambiguity, job insecurity, and work-life conflict) are commonly experienced (Odio et al., 2013).

Methodology

Relating to the exploratory nature of this study, the methodology selected for the purpose of this study is phenomenography. Understood as similar to phenomenology in that it seeks to understand phenomena, phenomenography diverges in its consideration of how individuals make meaning. Defined as "...the empirical study of the differing ways in which people experience, perceive, apprehend, understand, conceptualize various phenomena in and aspects of the world around us" (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013, p. 218), the phenomenographical methodology aligns with both the purpose and research questions associated with this study and the researcher's paradigm.

Developed during the 1970s by Marton, Svensson, Dhalgren, Saljo and others, phenomenography as a qualitative method gained prominence in the education field through the 1980s (Guglietti, 2015; Tight, 2016). The methodology has since been applied in many disciplines, including: chemistry, computing, economics, environment, geography, health care, nursing, information technologies, languages, mathematics, music, physics, science, sociology, and statistics (Tight, 2016). Centralized around open-ended questions as a method of generating results, phenomenographical researchers typically employ interviews as chosen method of data collection – vis-à-vis phenomenography – to gain a robust understanding of the phenomena of study.

While an ideal sample size varies among authors, Trigwell (2000) reports that 10-20 participants is ideal while Guglietti (2015), Tight (2016), and Samuelsson & Pramling (2016) note 20-30 is preferable. Given the scope of the current (Master's level) research

study, a sample size of up to 20 participants was developed. As phenomenographical studies seek to gather varying perspectives from individuals regarding the phenomena of study, researchers must collect sufficient data where a robust understanding of individual experiences is reached, where themes of said experiences begin to intersect. Though experiences will all remain unique to individual participants, characteristics of experiences may align, thus reaching saturation, a measure used to ensure that data is as representative as possible of the phenomena of study.

Participant Selection

Intended participants for this study included both Managers and Coordinators (middle managers) who were either presently employed or who had been previously involved in a minimum of one Major Games events between the years of 2010 to present time. Though employees of Manager and Coordinator positions are found throughout Major Games' Organizing Committees, strictly those involved with sport operations management (i.e., sport specific managers, athlete/official services, accreditation coordination, medal ceremonies delivery, etc.) were asked to participate in this study. Such a parameter ensured that all data gathered was as relevant to the sport industry as possible; while a Food and Beverage (FAB) Coordinator certainly plays a pivotal role in the success of a Major Games event, his or her direct association with the sport experience may be less than what was required to best service this study.

Additionally, including a 7-year timeline of participants' previous Games engagement ensured that participant data remained current, while allowing for a greater number of individuals from varying major games events to be included in the study. Individuals occupying Manager and Coordinator positions were specifically targeted

given their roles typically involve two or more months of employment with the Major Games Organizing Committee, thus having ample exposure to important factors of this study (i.e., experience with Major Games leaders).

Moreover, one element associated with these middle manager positions is that they are typically both lead by senior managers of the Major Games' Organizing Committee, while simultaneously leading followers (i.e., employees and/or volunteers). As such, the researcher held one assumption that the relationship between middle manager and senior manager/follower may have allowed for an increased opportunity for her to probe participants on comparisons and contrasts between participant as leader and participant as follower, potentially influencing collected data through participants' perspective of leader effect on employee development of perceived workplace fulfillment.

The researcher invited participants who were required to either currently be or have been middle managers in a minimum of one Major Games event to ensure that they possessed the appropriate firsthand experience working within the Major Games context, allowing the researcher to discover deeper understanding and insight into the phenomena of study. Following approval from the Brock University Research Ethics Board (REB), the researcher identified individuals from her network who met the specific participant requirements (i.e., middle manager titles) and duly invited them to partake in the study. This initial interaction took place by sending the Recruitment Script (Appendix A) to identified participants via previously sourced email addresses or via the professional networking account LinkedIn, with the Letter of Invitation (Appendix B) included. The Recruitment Script included a detailed account of the study, along with requirements of

agreeing participants and researcher contact information. The attached Letter of Invitation included further details regarding the study, along with participant rights, study benefits and risks to the participant, and pertinent contact information.

Following receipt of participant consent, the researcher sent a Letter of Consent (Appendix C) for participant information, and scheduled an interview date with each participant. While the researcher sent the Letter of Consent to the participant, she additionally asked each participant his or her verbal consent for his or her participation at the commencement of each interview, given the global nature of the study, where most interviews took place via telephone or videoconferencing technology (i.e., Skype). As participants were selected due to their information-rich experiences, the sampling method for this study was purposeful sampling – and more specifically homogenous sampling – as participants were targeted individuals who encompassed similar characteristics (i.e., Major Games positions) relevant to the purpose of this research (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013).

Research Site Selection

The site selection of this study took place within Organizing Committees of Major Games events. This site is specifically chosen as desired participants were found among Manager and Coordinator positions within Organizing Committee bodies. As the Major Games industry is internationally based, globally located Organizing Committees were permitted as appropriate research sites in this study. The researcher believed that restricting site selection to region-specific Organizing Committee sites would not benefit the purpose of the study given similar structures and position characteristics associated with Major Games events, and particularly in an effort to capitalize on a 20-participant

sample size for this study.

Though research site and place of the research are often misconstrued as similar variables to the research, they differ and thus require exploration. Place does not consider where a researcher's data will be accessed, but rather, the location where physical data collection will take place. Space and place are seen as important factors to the interview process, as comfortable and secure spaces are favourable for achieving trusted and open dialogue with participants (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013). Though all interview sessions were conducted via telephone and videoconferencing technology (i.e., Skype) due to the breadth of participant locations, the researcher ensured that should any face-to-face interview sessions be feasible, a secure location at Brock University's campus or private office of participant were available to be used as research place.

Data Collection Strategies

The data collection process is important to detail, as the researcher's choices influence both the integrity of the study, along with the findings (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013). With data collection processes, the researcher must consider various factors including time, place, and participants (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013). Regarding time, researchers must consider the impact of participants currently emerged in the phenomenon of interest (i.e., Major Games event) as their perception may be a reflection of either their immediate or past experiences (i.e., perceptions changing based on having experienced the phenomena seven years ago, versus experienced yesterday). Considering these elements, the researcher focused on recruiting those participants involved in the planning and delivery of a Major Games event from the years of 2010-present, allowing for a diverse sample of middle managers representing past events including the

Commonwealth Games, Pan American Games, and Olympic Games, among others, while ensuring that these data remained as current as possible.

Finally, the researcher had to consider the level of accessibility to potential participants (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013). Given her previous employment experience in Major Games contexts, the researcher contacted potential participants with relevant experience/positions who were known to her via previously sourced email addresses, or via the professional networking site LinkedIn. This networking site was employed to target, access, and contact eligible participants for this study, beyond the 10 participants of the desired 20 participant sample size sourced from the researcher's professional network.

As the typical sample size of a phenomenographical study is approximately 10-30 participants (Trigwell, 2000; Tight, 2016), the researcher sought to secure a sample size of 20 participants to both gain an in-depth understanding of participant experiences of the phenomena and achieve saturation. During the first round of recruitment, the researcher sent a Letter of Invitation (Appendix B) to 15 individuals listed within her professional network. Upon successfully recruiting 10 participants, the researcher commenced a second round of recruitment, contacting a further 11 individuals via LinkedIn messaging. In total, the researcher sent 26 Letters of Invitation (Appendix B), from which 20 individuals provided consent to participate in the study.

Following these recruitment efforts, the researcher scheduled and conducted semi-structured interviews with participants ranging from 30 to 60 minutes through a variety of media (e.g., telephone or videoconferencing technology [i.e., Skype]). In total, the researcher conducted 10 Skype and 10 telephone interviews. Using the semi-structured

interview guide (Appendix D), research questions, participant comments, and subsequent themes naturally emerged through researcher-participant discourse at the time of the interview (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013). Though the researcher ready preset questions, she both anticipated and encouraged a divergent flow of conversation from the script (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013).

The researcher created the semi-structured interview guide (Appendix D) and used semi-directive and probing questions, alongside which the researcher consciously made room to foster the dialogue to diverge between the participant and researcher to maximize the potential of the semi-structured interview (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013). The researcher recorded all interviews using a digital recording device, from which she later transcribed verbatim, obtaining participant permission to record through the Letter of Consent (Appendix C).

Process of Developing the Interview Guide

To develop the interview guide for the purpose of this study, the researcher first began crafting questions based upon her own experiences, rooted within the theoretical frameworks associated with the study (i.e., authentic leadership, workplace spirituality, and employees; perceived workplace fulfillment). Upon seeking examples from relevant studies in the sport management literature, the researcher noticed that many studies of a similar topic matter (i.e., Major Games and leadership literature) followed a quantitative research design. As such, the researcher accessed Savin-Baden & Major's (2013) qualitative methodological text, through which she could gain an in depth understanding of developing a qualitative interview guide. Further, the researcher's use of semi-structured interviews was supported through consulting of similar contextual works (i.e.,

studies of leadership and Major Games) conducted by Fletcher and Arnold (2011), Parent and Séguin (2008), and Parent et al. (2009) who each stated interview sessions, and semi-structured interview guides as their data collection strategies.

Creation of the Interview Guide Questions

The first research question of the current study reflects exploration of employees' perception of the Major Games work environment. As such, representative interview questions included: 1) please describe the Major Games' working environment, based on your experience; and 2) please tell me a/some word(s) (qualities/characteristics) that describe the Major Games industry. From this second question, the researcher added a follow up question of 3) why did you choose those word(s)? By asking participants these questions, the researcher sought to allow them to both reflect on their Major Games' work environment and share anecdotes that would accompany their chosen words and the ways they perceived their experience of working in Major Games' environments.

The second research question sought to illuminate participants' perceptions of their Major Games leaders by asking participants to think of an impactful Major Games leader that they've interacted with, and probing subsequent questions regarding said leader. For example, the researcher firstly asked participants to describe their chosen leader, giving words that they associate with said individual and context as to why said words were selected. Participants were then asked to describe specific qualities that this leader exemplified that they enjoyed, along with qualities that they didn't enjoy (if applicable). Participants were asked if they were of the same cultural background to their leader, and whether or not they believe that cultural differences influenced their experience with their leader, and were finally probed as to what impact their leader's

qualities had on the work environment and furthermore, their perceived workplace experience? Such questions were formulated to gain a robust understanding of the participants' experience with their Major Games leaders, aiming towards uncovering the impact of leaders on the development of Major Games employees' perceived workplace fulfillment.

Further, relative to the third research question, the researcher aimed to uncover influential elements toward the development of, and employees' experience with, workplace fulfillment in the Major Games' context. Accordingly, the researcher asked participants interview questions whereupon they reflected and answered relative to their Major Games experiences. Specifically, the researcher asked participants to define workplace fulfillment, based on their perceptions of their experiences. As fulfillment is understood as both a hedonic and eudaemoic construct (Ilies et al., 2005), the researcher asked a follow-up question to probe participants to think about which of the two constructs they most associated with their perception of workplace fulfillment. Specifically, the researcher asked participants "when you think of workplace fulfillment, would you describe your view of fulfillment as one of feeling good versus feeling bad or one of being fully engaged and true to oneself?"

The researcher concluded by asking participants questions on their perceptions of their experiences of workplace fulfillment; specifically, on how important they perceived workplace fulfillment is in their role as Major Games' employees and what they perceived as being influential to the development of their workplace fulfillment. Furthermore, the researcher asked participants to reflect on the wider Major Games

industry by speculating on what may contribute to their peers' development of perceived workplace fulfillment.

Finally, the researcher asked participants to name specific elements pertaining to their experience they perceived as most impactful to their feelings of both the presence of and lack thereof workplace fulfillment during their Major Games' work experience. The researcher designed questions to promote participants' reflection, thereby allowing them to explore their Major Games' experiences and to draw conclusions on their feelings of workplace fulfillment.

Data Analysis Strategies

The data analysis process involves breaking data into meaningful parts prior to their examination; thus, it is critical that researchers find the methods that suit the purpose of their research (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013). Through the data analysis process of the current study, the researcher used inductive and open coding, where she created codes that emerged from themes and trends of these data. Furthermore, as the researcher sought to understand the unique experiences of each participant, she applied thematic analysis to collected data. Thematic data analysis is a method through which researchers identify and analyze patterns that emerge from collected data, allowing for the researcher to reflect on reality, and deconstruct themes identified (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013).

Through the data analysis process, it was important to note how the constructivist paradigm influenced the way in which these data were interpreted. As a constructivist, the researcher interpreted all expressions as constructions of one's own truth, whether such expressions were representative of either the researcher or of the participants. As

such, any data anomalies present through the thematic analysis process were not be considered as anomalies, given both phenomenographical methodological guidelines and constructivist paradigm tenets indicate that there is value in each individual's experience.

Furthermore, data were interpreted as subjective to the construction of the participant's own truth, along with the construction of researcher's truth by which she received and interpreted these data, as per qualitative research methods. As Savin-Baden & Major (2013) note, it was important for the researcher to acknowledge both her own and participants' subjectivity while interpreting these data, thereby demonstrating the tentative nature of interpretation, maintaining openness to the negotiation of meaning, and recognizing the role of shared truth to the research. In consideration of such factors, the researcher acknowledged her role in the interpretation process.

Trustworthiness

Though qualitative research design is a valued method of conducting social research, critique remain, which scholars concerned about accessing the highest *quality* of qualitative findings due to the inherent interpretation of participant data by the researcher him or herself (Kornbluh, 2015). Connelly (2016) describes trustworthiness of a study as the degree of confidence the researcher may have in the methods used, including data collection and analysis to ensure quality of the study. Based upon Lincoln and Guba's (1985) widely accepted criteria, qualitative researchers must strive for credibility, dependability, confirmability, transferability and authenticity to achieve trustworthiness in their qualitative studies (Connelly, 2016).

To ensure credibility through this study, the researcher employed standard procedures typically represented through similar qualitative research studies, such as the

choice of data collection strategies and the subsequent development of the semi-structured interview guide. Furthermore, the researcher used member checking (Kornbluh, 2015; Amankwaa, 2016), to follow up with participants to confirm that interview transcripts accurately reflected participants' intended meaning, allowing them the opportunity to provide further commentary or clarification on their data. For dependability and confirmability, the researcher wrote notes throughout the interview and analysis processes (Connelly, 2016), detailing different aspects of the study, including: early trends and themes of the data, data anomalies, and connections made, both theoretically and practically.

As the researcher sought to accomplish a transferability of knowledge resulting from this study, she provided a thick description of the data, where readers may easily transfer and apply findings to other times, people, settings, or situations (Amankwaa, 2016). It is a task of qualitative researchers to detail their participants' perceptions of a phenomena without generalization (i.e., insinuating that one perception is indicative of everyone's perception of the phenomena). The representation of each perception as unique and singular is another characteristic that the researcher attempted to convey – aligning with the Constructivist paradigm – simply drawing links between participants' similar notions, rather than generalizing (Connelly, 2015).

Finally, the researcher prioritized authenticity throughout the research process by showing a range of participant realities (Connelly, 2015), conveying the role of the phenomena of study in participants' lives through use of their quotes, representing them through each area of the semi-structured interview guide. Through including these

varying perspectives, the researcher aimed to portray a robust and inclusive view of participants' experience within the Major Games context.

Confidentiality and Anonymity

While confidentiality and anonymity are closely connected, confidentiality relates to the researcher's provision of certainty to participants that their right for identifiable information to be left undisclosed is maintained, while anonymity is an example of confidentiality operationalized (Wiles, Crow, Heath, & Charles, 2008). Though anonymity ensures that participants cannot be identified, Lancaster (2017) shares that anonymizing data does not necessarily address confidentiality, where confidentiality ensures that no information gained from participants is deliberately or accidentally disclosed (i.e., do not discuss participant data with others), nor represented in a way in which participants may be identified (i.e., ensure data is presented in a way that does not illuminate participant characteristics) (Wiles et al., 2008).

As researchers typically seek to use confidentiality and anonymity as ways to minimize ethical implications and strengthen the validity of a study (Reamer, 1979), the researcher ensured confidentiality and anonymity measures were in place prior to data collection and through data analysis and presentation through the following strategies, including: 1) the use of pseudonyms; 2) the exclusion of gender specific pronouns; 3) exclusion of specific organizational affiliations from participants' direct quotations; and 4) by storing all data and recordings on the her personal, password protected computer.

Ethics

Savin-Baden and Major (2013) define ethics as the "correctness of particular behaviour" (p. 319). Ethical risks vary per study, yet can range from potential social,

economic, psychological, or physical harm assumed by the participant. As such, the researcher employed various steps to mediate ethical implications of this study. First, the researcher submitted an ethics application to Brock University's Research Ethics Board (REB), which was iteratively reviewed and evaluated such that all study methods were ensured as sound and considerate of participant rights. Within this application, the researcher included a Letter of Consent for participation (see Appendix C) in the study for REB members to review. Once accepted, this letter would be later distributed to all participants to be read, signed, and returned to the researcher prior to any data collection commencing.

Through the study, the researcher prioritized participants' rights, where she emphasized to participants the importance of consent, an awareness of participants' full right to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty, her intention to maintain anonymity and confidentiality through the study by use of pseudonyms, and participants' right to select their pseudonym, should they choose. The researcher additionally provided participants with the right to access all and any information regarding the study, including: what would be done with these data; how, where, and for how long these data would be stored; the findings of the study; the percentage of their data that would be later included within the study; and who would be privy to the results of the study.

It was important for the researcher to consider the ethical implications of participants' engagement in the study to limit any and all potential risks to the participant prior to their participation. To achieve this, the researcher considered all ethical elements of this study from the participants' perspective, particularly related to the type and content of questions used, specifically ensuring they were open-ended and non-

presumptive of responses given. As such, ethical implications of this study included: attempted anonymity of participant involvement in the study or information shared cannot be guaranteed, despite confidentiality, given characteristics may prove recognizable to other Major Games employees. Furthermore, the researcher considered other ethical implications of the study, including: participants' potential experience of discomfort or emotional turmoil when discussing the role of leaders, their perceived workplace fulfillment in their organization, or their workplace/life related fulfillment. Lastly, the researcher considered the potentially emotionally taxing nature of the interview questions, should participants' experiences with fulfillment seeking have been negative.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to explore the significance of authentic leadership and workplace spirituality on the development of employees' perceived workplace fulfillment in the Major Games context. By methodologically planning all elements to this study, including site selection, participant selection, and ethical considerations, along with acknowledging the theoretical frameworks and chosen methodology, the researcher sought to ensure a well-informed research design where both she and participants felt comfortable with the research process.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

As the purpose of this study was to explore the significance of authentic leadership and workplace spirituality on the development of employees' perceived workplace fulfillment in the Major Games context, this chapter serves as an outline of the methodological fulfillment of the research purpose. Guided by a qualitative research design and phenomenographical methodology, the researcher developed a semi-structured interview guide to reflect open-ended questions, allowing for an organic discourse between researcher and each consenting participant. Through an exploration of the theoretical frameworks supporting the research purpose (i.e., authentic leadership, workplace spirituality, and employees' perceived workplace fulfillment) the researcher conducted interview sessions ranging in duration from 30 to 60 minutes with 20 participants who the researcher purposively recruited from both her professional network and from the LinkedIn professional networking site. The researcher engaged in analysis of the collected interview data, using the strategies of inductive and open coding and thematic data analyses, thereby allowing her to witness themes and trends to emerge from these collected data. As per the phenomenographic methodology, the researcher considered all participant data as pertinent to the study, including any anomalies to trends and themes that emerged from these data.

The purpose of this chapter is to detail research findings from collected data. Specifically, the findings are presented according to the three research questions that guided the study, including: 1) how is the Major Games workplace described based on employees' experiences?; 2) how do Major Game employees perceive leader qualities of

the leaders they encounter in this working environment?; 3) how is employees' perceived workplace fulfillment positively or negatively influenced in the Major Games context, if at all? In the following presentation of the findings, the researcher includes details on trends and anomalies, according to these research questions. Further, the researcher included data representative of participants' quotes to demonstrate Major Games employees' perceptions of their working environment, their leaders, and their experience with workplace fulfillment.

Positive Elements of the Major Games' Environment

Overall, participants shared largely positive descriptions of their Major Games' working environment, specifically including sentiments of a unique, fulfilling and fun work environment, in which like-minded individuals come together and operate in a collaborative manner. Participant I expressed their view of environmental uniqueness through the size of the event, stating "there's definitely a sense of your part of something huge and you're one contributing member and to be directly involved is a privilege, and to feel like you're really contributing to this massive project is a special and unique opportunity." Participant Z furthermore noted the relationship among Major Games' employees as unique, sharing "I have never actually been in an organization where there was such an intense ... feeling of purpose that was shared between the employees."

When discussing how they perceive the Major Games' working environment as fulfilling, Participants often associated feelings of fulfillment to specific individuals (i.e., their leader) or to their team. Participant O stated: "working as part of a team to then deliver something that turned into be world class and was recognized by a number of stakeholders kind of gave you that sense of fulfillment, of pride, of you know

achievement as well.” Participant J additionally pointed to those who work within the same team, stating “the people that are around me are so supportive and so willing to help their team, that it makes you feel really fulfilled coming in.”

Negative Elements of the Major Games’ Environment

While participants noted that the factors contributing to the uniqueness of the Major Games industry included its time-sensitive (i.e., hard project deadlines) and ever-changing nature, they candidly detailed their perceptions of industry elements they perceived as less ideal to the Major Games’ working environment. For example, participants discussed Major Games Organizing Committees as bureaucratic through the planning phase of the Games and detailed environments as policy driven, where change (e.g., need for extra equipment) is slow given established and structured protocol. While participants noted that the environment commonly changes toward becoming more operational near event delivery (i.e., becomes more fast-paced, less policy driven), participants also noted that this shift culminates toward an environment they perceive as intense, pressurized, and stressful as the event’s lifespan nears its conclusion.

As Participant K shared, the Major Games’ working environment is initially driven by corporate function (i.e., human resource, procurement, and finance functions) as the lifespan begins and later shifts to reflect an operationally focused organization. Speaking to the inherent shift between bureaucracy and operation, Participant K stated: “there’s a lot of corporate function type areas that almost strangle the operational areas... it’s like a clash of the titans.” Participant G identified that employees perceive a stressful and pressure-ridden Major Games’ environment, arising from the international scrutiny (i.e., worldwide critics of mega-sport events) toward the host city of a Major Games

event, where employees' stress levels tend to rise as a result of associated demands (e.g., the need to keep a minimized budget due to use of tax-payer dollars). Participant Y extended this thought, stating "this pressure comes from around the world to keep the Games' budget as small as possible, and we all know that this is the biggest challenge of Organizing Committees." Finally, Participant R associated pressure and stress to client groups—including political figures and world class athletes—stating: "you've got Heads of State attending, you've got the best athletes in the world, it's the best of everything"; as such, this Participant inferred that expectations of event stakeholders and leaders in addition to the world audience remain extremely high.

Leader Qualities Exhibited in the Major Games' Workplace Environment

To probe leader influence on Major Games' employees in the workplace environment, the researcher asked Participants to describe a leader with whom they interacted frequently by using phrases or words that came to their mind depicting the leader's unique qualities and characteristics. Further, the researcher asked Participants to reflect on the leader's demonstrated qualities that employees perceived as enjoyable as or positively impactful to their own Major Games' experience, in addition to the leader's demonstrated qualities employees perceived as unenjoyable or as negatively impactful to their own Major Games' experience. Moreover, the researcher questioned the impact that such perceived leader qualities had on them within their working environment and by extension on their overall workplace experience. Finally, the researcher asked Participants to reflect on their experiences with Major Games leaders who embodied different cultural backgrounds to their own in an effort to speak to the potential impact such cultural differences play on the way in which leaders lead, and the way in which

employees perceive their leaders' style of leading. The researcher asked such questions to gain a deeper understanding of participants' perceptions of Major Games' leaders and their given influence on Major Games' employees in this context.

Ideal Leader Qualities

Numerous participants pointed to the leader-follower relationship as a pivotal element contributing to the success of their Major Games' experience, beginning with Participant S who found that "whenever you feel like you're not just a workhorse for somebody and your opinion matters ... your insight matters, it definitely helps."

Participant J shared similar sentiments, echoing that leaders directly influence employee motivation, claiming that with a positive leader, "your motivation is through the roof because you've got that person there that's supporting you so much." Participant I described the importance of leaders in the Major Games' environment as a key motivator for employees, particularly as employees' progress through the event's lifespan, stating:

seeing the importance of every, again every member of the hundreds of thousands of people that will evidentially become a part of this team and understanding the importance of each role and responsibility, regardless of how menial it may seem, and understanding the need to speak to them, both literally and figuratively and making them feel like they're part of the entire movement.

Participants' perception of leader support as positively impactful to employees' Major Games' experience was prevalent, as employees discussed ideal leadership qualities and further leader influence on team and organizational culture. For example, Participant X detailed that their leader "acted as more of a support to us than anything,"

as the leader ensured that team members were equipped with the necessary tools and support to successfully deliver projects.

Participant Q found their leader's practice of following up regarding assigned tasks to be a particular asset, as through following up, the leader can communicate a 2-way relationship of trust. Specifically, the Participant characterized the relationship as one where the leader could trust that he/she would complete the assigned work and in turn, the Participant could trust that the leader would follow up and ask and have questions answered. Participant L further felt that the kind of accessibility to "openly share your comments or your worries" created a positive work environment and leader-follower relationship. In particular, this Participant noted "you have to work really hard at certain points of an Organizing Committee, especially during Games Time," and as such, the "acknowledgement of when, you know, you'd done a good job – so acknowledgement of how hard you were potentially trying" was extremely impactful to the leader-follower relationship, along with how leaders foster the work environment.

Non-Ideal Leader Qualities

As Participants detailed the ideal qualities of leader support and leading by example (e.g., asking for open communication by demonstrating open communication) as positively influential to their team's effectiveness or within the larger organizational culture, leaders exhibiting the following qualities of support, trust, and empowerment through event tasks, while remaining communicative, approachable, and committed to employee success during the event's lifespan had positive impacts on workplace fulfillment. Despite participants' perceiving the majority of leaders as having a positive influence on their Major Games' experience, participants also shared perspectives of their

experiences of leaders from whom they incurred a negative impact. Specifically, participants perceived negative leader characteristics as including: leaders who were not team players, leaders who demonstrated a lack of trust toward employees, leaders who displayed poor relational management skills (i.e., lacking adaptability and respect for boundaries with others).

Participant X felt leaders must lead by example (e.g., fostering open communication by being communicative themselves), and stated their lack of appreciation for leaders who “think they’re kind of above certain tasks”, while Participant V felt it is pivotal for leaders to possess trust for their followers. This Participant described their leader as not “necessarily want[ing] to listen to everyone’s opinion” if the leader themselves did not generate the idea originally. As Participant S synthesized, Major Games’ employees must operate events as a “one team, one dream...” kind of phenomenon, where “everyone works together and you support each other.”

Factors Influencing Employees Perceived Workplace Fulfillment

As the researcher focused on exploring employees’ perceived workplace fulfillment through Research Question 3 (RQ3), findings were most rich throughout this section, such that the researcher could draw insights and conclusions regarding the development of employees’ perceived workplace fulfillment in the Major Games context. Also, participants themselves created connections between their internal emotions and their workplace experiences. Participants described their relationship with fulfillment as a spectrum that shifted over the event's timespan, and emphasized the role of value congruence and a sense of community as main elements to their development of

perceived workplace fulfillment. From their reflections, participants explored their own experiences with workplace fulfillment, based on their Major Games work experiences.

Fulfillment as a Spectrum

While it was found that participants feel fulfilled within the Major Games' context, they recognize that employees' experience of such fulfillment exists on a kind of spectrum with any individual employee having potential to alter his or her experience of fulfillment, based upon his or her age/life course, career progression, or specific Games' environment. As the majority of participants perceived their experience of fulfillment to be associated with the eudaemonic construct (i.e., being true to themselves, realizing their true potential), some participants perceived that their experience of workplace fulfillment could be best described by a combination of both hedonic and eudaemonic constructs (e.g., where positive feelings at work [hedonic] lead to feelings of deeper fulfillment [eudaemonic]). Furthermore, no participants felt that simply the hedonic perspective aligned with their perceptions of workplace fulfillment.

With this, participants recognized that workplace fulfillment may result based upon different factors throughout Major Games employees' career. For example, participants spoke to how they may have been enticed by the prospect of travelling to work among sport professionals at the beginning of the career, and considered this prospect as a main contributor to their perceived workplace fulfillment. Participants spoke to subsequently developing and becoming more senior in their Major Games roles, upon which time they no longer perceived the prospect of travelling as the highest contributor to their experience of workplace fulfillment. Alternatively, employees perceived that new challenges, different roles, or greater stability related to a work-life

balance were necessary elements to their experience of fulfillment. Participant H described their perceived change in fulfillment as reflecting their life-stage, particularly when entering the mid-30 age range, stating:

Now will that change in the future, will fulfillment be something different...
am I feeling fulfilled in that I'm learning something that I didn't know before,
or am I making new connections that I didn't have before? Now, I feel that that is
starting to change a little bit, like your mid-30s, you're thinking, you know life
fulfillment is a little bit different, it might be not just career based but family
based or experiences based...

Similarly described, Participant L stated: "you end up sacrificing quite a lot personally, in terms of working hours and maybe missed opportunities in doing other things, personal life, when you're working at an Organizing Committee." Moreover, Participant I shared their experience with fulfillment over time, experiencing what they considered to be a more traditional definition of fulfillment, stating that they became:

much more focused on 'okay how am I performing, partly more self-reflective,
how am I performing, how am I growing?', and it became more, probably more of
a standard, what I would perceive to be more of a standard definition of
workplace satisfaction and inspiration was more about the opportunity to grow
and get that opportunity.

Finally, Participant H noted that the context of the specific event impacted their perceived experience of fulfillment, whereby they felt fulfilled by "learning about a different culture ... and having felt like you're doing something that's never been done before." When this Participant further compared this experience to another event experience, they

derived an experience of fulfillment from “hosting [the event] in one of the major cities in the world, and the logistics of doing that, [was] absolutely phenomenal.”

Despite Participants’ perceptions outlining their experience of workplace fulfillment, they further perceived that the two central contributors to the development of employees’ perceived workplace fulfillment in the Major Games’ context were first, their personal value congruence with the event itself; and second, the sense of community they experienced while working within the organization. As such, Participants’ perceived workplace fulfillment remains relevant to the Major Games’ work experience, particularly given their motivation to continue pursuing Major Games’ roles.

Value Congruence

From these analyzed data, participants’ felt their values aligned with the Major Games’ event when the following occurred, including their feeling a sense of achievement and purpose, when they successfully served clients, and when they experienced feelings of being valued by their leader, team, or organization. Participant Q expressed that they experienced workplace fulfillment when they experienced an alignment of their values with the experience itself, in that they were able to “meet the needs that I’m seeking from this role.” Participant X extended this perception, stating that “it’s kind of that intrinsic motivation and alignment if you will, with your own personal values that helps kind of create that fulfillment in the workplace.” Participant H however, felt that a combination of factors must align them to experience both value congruence and workplace fulfillment, stating: “everything aligned perfectly and it was just, a great team and a great event and a great city and just fit with the way that I like to work.”

Sense of Community

Participants' alignment of values with an event was found to further relate to their development of perceived workplace fulfillment through the development of a sense of community. Specifically, participants reported that their relationships among colleagues, leaders, and stakeholders were pivotal contributors to their perceived experience of fulfillment in the Major Games workplace. Participant N shared "it comes down to people, the connections you make with people ... you know the people you surround yourself with and the people you spend your time with, they're the ones that have the ability to provide fulfillment." Participant U agreed, pointing to the complex nature of relationships among Major Games' employees, stating that despite hardships, to "achieve something together is my major fulfillment ... they did it through the thick and thin of it all and then they created this amazing thing."

Participant P felt that a combination of value congruence through travelling and the relationships that they built through those opportunities were two contributing factors to what led to their perceived experience of fulfillment, stating:

I really love traveling and I love being, I love meeting people from different places in the world and I really value those experiences and being able to learn you know, how we... are versus [others] and, you know, understanding just a little bit about other cultures brings me a lot of personal joy to have those relationships.

While Participant J attributed their relationship with the wider organizational culture as influential to the development of their perceived experience of workplace fulfillment, they noted "I honestly have to say it comes down to that team culture and fulfillment. Like I think if you have a positive, supportive, approachable, happy team, then that

reflects onto you and it makes you want to do better at what you do and feel more fulfilled.”

Further Points of Interest

Of the 20 participants interviewed, four mentioned their leaders as directly impactful to their development of perceived workplace fulfillment in the Major Games’ context (e.g., named their leader as a key contributor to perceived workplace fulfillment). While the remaining 16 participants did not explicitly name leaders as influential, they frequently shared similar sentiments. For example, six participants stated that when they felt valued by their leader, team, or organization (e.g., gained positive feedback based upon performance from their leader or colleagues), they experienced workplace fulfillment, while two participants associated team culture (i.e., comradery) as an impactful element contributing to their feelings of workplace fulfillment, while recognizing that this culture is likely established from leader to followers. When participants attributed their experience of workplace fulfillment to the role that leaders played in such experiences, they largely expressed feelings of gratitude towards leaders. Participant O shared “but that all comes from, you know, the leader who, and to me I see it as they’re the one who gave me the opportunity to do that in the first place, therefore, you know, my work ethic is literally them.” Participant V echoed “I think, well number one I think my manager giving, you know trusting me and giving me the opportunity in the first place” impacted their perception of having experienced fulfillment.

Further, participants recognized their respective leader’s role in actively creating and maintaining a culture of community and openness by virtue of how they lead, along

with those who these leaders hire to become team members. Participant Z found these particular leadership capabilities to contribute to their experience, sharing:

the leadership team actually was a huge contributor to that [fulfillment]. So, um, there was one leader in particular... we created... what we called the triumvirate; so there was myself, and my back-office counterpart and this particular leader, and we were sort of, the happy trio. And I formed really deep relationships with them.

Participant Z felt that the leader's actions lead them to experience fulfillment through developing relationships and finding value congruence within the team setting.

Participant X further detailed the role of leaders in their experience of workplace fulfillment, alluding:

I think it all really starts either within a strategic plan, or kind of identifying the core values if you will that you want to achieve as an organization. So, you know, if you kind of set this framework that you intend to operate within, outside of that it obviously number one starts with hiring the right leader that can foster and promote that culture, but then similarly once that person is hired, it's hiring the right people that are aligned with that and that can be a very challenging thing to do.

As such, Participant X demonstrated through these words that though a participant may not have perceived a leader's impact as directly influencing their perceived workplace fulfillment, without leaders fostering a positive organizational culture and hiring team members who could reflect and enact such cultural values, participants may not otherwise have experienced workplace fulfillment.

Though the majority of participants reported the Major Games' environment as personally fulfilling (i.e., through alignment of values, developed relationships, sense of community), one participant experienced difficulty when they described their experience of workplace fulfillment in the Major Games' context. While this participant shared their personal love of sport and their motive of being of service to clients as reasons for remaining employed within the Major Games' realm, they expressed disappointment and disgust when sharing perspectives on the Major Games' industry, citing that their respect for the context was majorly detracted by their perception of the politics and greed experienced in the context (e.g., favouring of certain individuals for political or financial gain).

Regarding their leader, this Participant stated: "he was very much in it for his own, let's say vanity. I don't really think he helped our project greatly... there was a lot of ... corrupt[ion], a bit like feathering your own nest kind of thing." As such, this Participant felt that their leader, and the environment in which the respective leader fostered, contributed to their demotivated experience of their Major Games' environment. When reflecting on how the Participant's personal values interacted with the specific Major Games' work context, the Participant asserted:

... morally, I was completely broken because as I said, I didn't take a lot of inspiration from a lot of the way that things were done... I find the Olympic movement itself to be pretty morally bankrupt, which is a horrendous shame because I really like the Olympic Games and I like what they stand for, but the running of it is shameful... so while I can look back now and say 'well yeah, I was fulfilled by my job because I was busy everyday', I had motivation to keep

going, but in terms of like spiritual fulfillment, or like feeling like you did the right thing, I completely disagree.

Later, this same Participant shared that they feel a sense of shame to be a part of the Major Games industry; however, when probed as to their decision to remain working in this industry, the Participant described a sense of helplessness, sharing that they felt they could not positively affect change in the Major Games' environment should they remove themselves from the industry. Regarding their perceived experience of workplace fulfillment, this Participant stated feeling "motivated by the concept of the Olympic Games or what they should be," a sentiment from which this Participant draws as their experience of workplace fulfillment.

When the researcher probed once more regarding the role of workplace fulfillment in the Major Games context, the Participant postulated that while the glamorous element to international sport attracts individuals to become employees, this glamorous element in turn, plays into the "dark side" of the industry that has risen to the surface through popular media and public opinion over time. While the Participant felt they were least fulfilled by the experience of having to follow decisions with which they morally disagreed (e.g., favouring clients based upon politics, various "inefficiencies due to sort of burying heads in the sand for whatever reason"), the Participant found the current study interesting.

As the Major Games' employee base typically includes a high level of self-motivated individuals, one Participant believed that Major Games' organizations pay little attention to how employees experience fulfillment. This Participant stated "employers or the management, they think it's such a privilege to work on a Major

Games that they don't really need to fulfill their employees," further noting the short-term nature of Major Games' events as possibly related to the lack of employee development program implementation. This Participant stated "I wouldn't suggest that the concept of fulfillment is one that is very important in Major Games on an HR level ... I think in some organizations they make a point of making sure their employees are okay and you know, they offer up services in terms of career development, you just don't get that in an Organizing Committee."

Generational Differences

While the researcher postulated earlier in this document that employees' generation (i.e., birth decade) may be an important element for organizational leaders to consider, given the influence of shared generational experiences on the development of individual personality, capacities, and behaviours (Kellison et al., 2013), it was found that generational differences did not appear to have an influence on participants' perception of their perceived workplace fulfillment through this study. Through the present study, participants represented two primary generations, including: first, Generation X (i.e., those born between 1961-1980) and second, Generation Y (i.e., those born between 1981-2000), where less participants were born within the Generation X than the Generation Y demographics. As experiences shared among individuals within specific generations are said to influence workplace experiences (Kellison et al., 2013), the researcher initially sought this information to consider generational experiences as rationale toward differences in these data. Through the analysis processes however, it was found that participants who were representative of these two generational demographics held vastly

similar subjective perceptions toward the Major Games' environment, their individual leadership preferences, and their experiences with perceived workplace fulfillment.

Demographics

While the researcher collected other demographic information (i.e., participants' nationality, sex, experience within the Major Games industry) and analyzed such information as potential rationale for data discrepancies (e.g., female participants preferring different styles of leadership to their male counterparts), it was found that this information were not factors influencing participants' perceptions on interview questions. For example, the researcher intended to be strategic when asking participants to disclose their respective nationality with an assumption that their individual perceptions of workplace environments, leader relationships, or workplace fulfillment may have varied, based on the environment in which participants were born and raised. That said, it was found that cultural differences seemed to demonstrate no impact on participants' perceptions, nor on their development of their perceived workplace fulfillment.

Additionally, the researcher noted participants' sex as a potential point of interest related to how female and male Major Game employees' values and perceptions may differ. As the total sample of 20 participants included 13 females (65%) and seven (35%) males, this ratio was deemed appropriate, given the researcher found no overt differences within these particular groups of participants within these collected data. Finally, the researcher asked Participants about their event experience within Major Games' organizations (i.e., how many events with which they had previously been employed). Despite the large divergence found (e.g., the most event participants had experienced was ten Major Games events and the least events participants had experienced was one Major

Games event), participants' level of experience was not considered to impact collected data, given the lack of discrepancies through data analysis.

Conclusion

Through an analysis of these interview data, participants were found to perceive the Major Games' environment as unique, particularly related to contrasting positive attributes (i.e., fulfillment, fun, collaboration) and negative attributes (i.e., bureaucracy, intensity, pressure, stress). While participants perceived Major Games' leaders as supportive, trusting, communicative and approachable, they also shared their perceptions of negative leaders, said to lack skill in forming and maintaining teams (i.e., positively perceived team cultures), developing employee trust (e.g., through open communication and support), and adapting to employees' needs (i.e., allowing employee autonomy), and setting boundaries. Though most participants reported they experienced fulfillment in relation to enacting and working within their Major Games' roles, they also revealed their recognition of experiencing fulfillment as located on an ever-shifting spectrum that changed through their age/life course, career progression and specific Games environments. Though one Participant emoted negatively in response to the researcher's questions of perceived workplace fulfilment in the Major Games' context, all other participants identified value congruence and sense of community as pivotal contributors toward the development of their perceived workplace fulfillment.

As Participant S eloquently stated, "when you go to Games you're all nomads. You all don't own anything. There's barely any kids, there's no pets, there's no home. You know, you're renting somewhere for a year or two and then you're giving it all up and doing something next. So, I think it's just a different reality." Such a reality as

contributing toward employees' perceived workplace fulfillment in the Major Games context requires further illumination, commencing next with a discussion of these findings, as associated with the authentic leadership and workplace spirituality theoretical frameworks.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

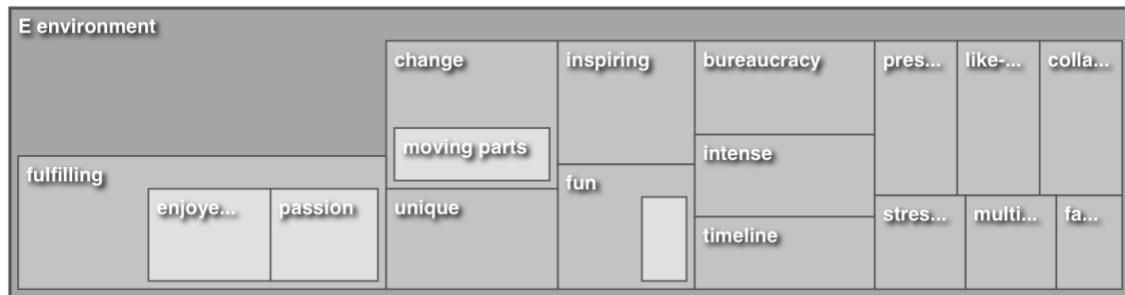
In the following Chapter, the trends and themes that were identified and detailed earlier will be discussed further. As the purpose of this study was to explore the significance of authentic leadership and workplace spirituality on the development of employees' perceived workplace fulfillment in the Major Games context, the findings are discussed by linking initial postulations and participant data to relevant theoretical frameworks that guide the current study. Through an investigation of the findings, participants' perceptions of the Major Games environment, leader influence on employees' perceived workplace environment, employees' perceived value congruence, and the presence of sense of community among Major Games teams and organizations was made available, the connections among participant data and theoretical frameworks toward further understanding of employees' perceived workplace fulfillment in the Major Games context will be established.

Participants' Experience of the Major Games Work Environment

Related to Research Question 1 (RQ1), the researcher sought participants' perceptions on the Major Games' working environment, based on their experiences. Through these collected data, it became evident that participants interpret the Major Games environment to be both positively oriented and complex. While participants reported the Major Games environment to be a fun, fulfilling atmosphere, highlighted by the coming together of like-minded individuals to work collaboratively (see Figure 2), they further detailed this working environment as a unique representative of several situational factors, including: time sensitivity throughout the event delivery, ever-

changing operational plans, bureaucratic structure, and commensurate experience of pressure, stress, and intensity through transition from event planning to event delivery.

Figure 2: Depiction of Participants' Words Associated with Major Games' Environments



While little research exists regarding employees' perceptions of the Major Games work environment, Odio et al. (2013) confirm that the complexity employees experience while working within the Major Games' working environment is due to unique organizational stressors, including: heavy workload, short time constraints, role ambiguity, job insecurity, and work-life conflict. Moreover, Parent et al. (2009) attribute the working environment of this industry as unique due to the nature of the temporary, high-velocity of work that is highly susceptible to change. Though participants expressed positive sentiments of enjoyment when discussing their work environments, the researcher sought to further understand how Major Games' leaders influence the working environment, and by extension, how employees' perceive the Major Games environment.

Leader Influence

Through participants' responses to Research Question 2 (RQ2) relating to their experience with leaders within the Major Games environment, the researcher gained enhanced clarity on the role leaders serve toward development of employees' perceived workplace fulfillment. Where participants recognized the importance of Major Games' leaders on their perceived workplace fulfillment, they reported their leaders' positive

impact on them through the leaders' respective demonstration of empowerment, trust and support. Given Parent and Séguin's (2008) assertion that Major Games' settings require leaders who possess unique skills, participants noted that leaders influence culture development among specific teams and the wider organization of the Major Games' event through demonstrating certain qualities and characteristics. In turn, such culture influences employees' perceptions of the congruence between their personal values and those held within the collection of the event, in addition to their perception of community arising within event teams.

Development of Organizational Culture

Given MacIntosh and Doherty's (2014) contention that organizational culture has become arguably a most important concept for sport management scholars to comprehend, sport leaders should be among those interested in this theoretical construct, due to its practical application toward the betterment of sport organizations.

Organizational culture may be of specific interest to Major Games Organizing Committees and their leaders given the project based nature of such Major Games events, where the creation of a shared vision is pivotal to the mobilization of employees towards delivery of a successful event (Parent et al., 2009).

Gaining prominence since Pettigrew's (1979) analysis of processes associated with the creation of organizational culture, the concept of organizational culture represents insight into organizational life, including the "rich tapestry of meaning around everyday tasks and objectives in the workplace" (MacIntosh & Doherty, 2014, p. 106). Where organizational culture has been shown to positively influence employee satisfaction and organizational commitment, MacIntosh and Doherty (2014) outline that

the framework is furthermore associated with increased organizational performance through employee involvement, adaptability, positive labour relations, and sustained competitive advantage.

Though organizational culture has the potential to influence employees' attitudes and behaviour through organizational values and beliefs, the concept itself is widely considered to be socially constructed; that is, it is developed from an amalgam of employees' existing and shared values and beliefs, which in turn guides their collective behaviour (MacIntosh & Doherty, 2014). As socially constructed, leaders reflect and maintain organizational culture, given it is they who reinforce organizational values and beliefs through their own behaviours (MacIntosh & Doherty, 2014). In this study, participants noted this finding in reference to RQ2, as they detailed the role of leaders in developing organizational or team culture, as derived from leader support, employee empowerment, open communication, and mutual trust.

Parent et al. (2009) support these findings surrounding leadership in major sporting events, as the leader-follower relationship in project based environments is said to involve more than the provision of rewards and requesting of compliance, but leaders engaging their followers' commitment to the vision, team and wider organizational cultures. As Bass and Avolio (1993) note that organizational culture aligns with leadership behaviours, it may be reasonable to assume that leaders' behaviours toward the development of team and organizational culture may thereby influence the degree to which employees perceive their individual values are aligned within their organization, along with the sense of community they experience among organizations and teams, both

of which participants believed in the current study served as impactful factors toward their perceived workplace fulfillment.

Value Congruence

Hamm (2008) defines values as “beliefs that can be held by individuals or entities such as organizations” (p. 124), noting value congruence as “the degree to which individuals and organizational values align” (p. 124). Given these definitions, participants perceived value congruence as arising through such aspects, including: their sense of achievement experienced throughout the event, their feeling of a sense of purpose within the event delivery process, being valued by leaders and other team members and the result of athlete/client satisfaction with the event (see Figure 3). As participants thought value congruence served as a primary contributor to their perception of their Major Games experiences as fulfilling, sport management scholars support the notion that understanding employees’ values is an important undertaking, particularly by leaders, given individuals prefer to work within environments which hold congruent values and beliefs to their own (Amos & Weathington, 2008; Hamm, 2008).

Figure 3: Depiction of Participants’ Words Associated with Value Congruence within Major Games’ Environments



Given the importance participants placed on value congruence in the current study, employees and organizations experience of such congruence may prove

particularly beneficial within the unique Major Games context, where employees' may lead to higher levels of employee satisfaction and by extension, their perceived workplace fulfillment (Chatman, 1991). Additionally, Amos and Weathington (2008) note that when value congruence exists between employees and organizations, employees are more likely to exhibit positive attitudes, behaviours and commitment, all assets within the ever-changing mega-sport event environment. As individuals' values are particularly noted as belonging to specific motivational domains (i.e., cognitive and social representations of important human goals) (Ashkanasy & O'Connor, 1997), it is not a surprising association that employees' values and value congruence within organizational settings (i.e., organizational culture) is an impactful characteristic toward employees' perceived workplace fulfillment. While research reflects the relationship between employee value congruence and job satisfaction, research exploring employee value congruence and organizational satisfaction (e.g., perceived fulfillment among Major Games' Organizing Committees) remains sparse (Amos & Weathington, 2008).

Through these data, participants detailed one element of value congruence as pertaining to their feelings of being valued by both organizational leaders and team members. Amos and Weathington (2008) echo this finding, stating that when employees' values match those of both their colleagues and leaders, employees collectively report higher levels of satisfaction with their jobs. Additionally, Pan and Yeh (2012) postulate that through value congruence between employees and leaders, employees may notice their leaders as being supportive of them. Given participants noted leaders' support as influencing their perceived workplace fulfillment, perhaps participants experience workplace fulfillment in the Major Games' context through their value congruence with

the particular organization, leaders, and colleagues, in addition to the feelings of value and support they receive from Major Games leaders and team members

Sense of Community

Further, participants described a concept forwarded and supported by Parent et al. (2009), where a high degree of perceived workplace fulfillment stems from the quality of relationships among Major Games' leaders and team members. Parent et al. (2009) detail followers' strong personal identification with their leader as a fixture of leadership within project based work environments such as mega-sport events. As participants eluded that relationships represent a sense of community among both event teams and the wider organization, Warner, Kerwin, and Walker, (2013) note that sense of community heightens employees' morale, and links positively to employee retention, satisfaction, and stress reduction. These scholars further outline sense of community through various environmental or community characteristics that lead individuals to feel belonging and social support within group contexts. Further, the scholars associate the sense of community framework with benefits including employees' enhanced quality of life, an important characteristic for any industry, specifically within sport management and recreation contexts (Warner et al., 2013) where extended working hours and weeks (i.e., the expectation of working on weekends) is common (Kellison et al., 2013).

Kellett and Warner (2011) recognize that participants' experience within sporting environments influences their desire to continue participating in the future. Despite this association, a paucity of research exists on the perspective that sport organizational employees also act as participants of the sport. For example, Kellett and Warner's (2011) study surrounding the role of umpires in sport organizations yields a major finding that

sport managers consider umpires as service providers, rather than sport participants. As these authors note, the stressful nature of umpiring—similar perhaps to the stress incurred by employees who work within the Major Games environment—must be further understood as such stress may prove pivotal to an umpire's decision to continue participation in the sport, similarly to the experiences these participants (i.e., Major Games employees). As the workplace acts centrally as the primary social institution for individuals (van der Walt & de Klerk, 2014, p. 383), sport industry leaders should consider the ramifications of framing employees as participants rather than service providers toward the development of a sense of community at work, and furthermore, toward employees' perceived sense of fulfillment.

As Kellett and Warner (2011) continue, leaders may be well founded to consider employees' perceptions of the kind of community in which they are allowed to feel part of a social world, given that in association with employees' feelings of belonging, shared importance to team members, and commitment to each other, sense of community allows for increased levels of employee satisfaction and perception of organizational support, thereby increasing employee work effort and commitment. These authors also note that sense of community is of particular relevance to some elements of the sport industry, given its positive relationship with seasonal-employment retention, an element embedded in the temporal setting of the Major Games context and includes characteristics as non-traditional working hours, training hours, and event schedules (Kellett & Warner, 2011).

As sport is widely considered a social institution, offering individuals who participate a collective social experience, Warner et al. (2013) believe employees receive a crucial element of work through sense of community; specifically, perceived fulfillment

in sport environments. For participants to experience sense of community in sport, Omoto and Packard (2016) state that elements including membership, shared emotional connection, and perceived commonalities among group members (e.g., common interests, values, characteristics) must be present. These findings support Warner et al.'s (2013) work, where these researchers point to six necessary characteristics that must be present in order for participants to experience a sense of community (i.e., administrative consideration, common interest, competition, equity in administrative decisions, leadership, social spaces).

Of these six characteristics, four directly align relative to participant data collected and analyzed in this study (i.e., common interests, competition, leadership opportunities, interacting with one another). First, participants pointed to having common interests (i.e., group dynamics, networking, friendships), noting they had formed relationships through their Major Games' experiences, which acted as their primary motivation for continuing in Major Games' roles. Participants' relational bonds with others when working in Major Games' contexts fostered lasting friendships, leading to the largest contributor toward the development of participants' perceived workplace fulfillment. Demonstrating the impact of common interests, participants described experiences with positive group dynamics through collaborative work and the formation of friendships with like-minded colleagues as specifically available within the Major Games context, where shared passions and motivations were experienced throughout Major Games Organizing Committees, influencing employees' feelings of fulfillment.

In addition, Warner et al. (2013) note the concept of competition (i.e., internal and external challenges against which individuals/groups must excel) plays a role in the

development of sense of community. This element may be related to the experiences of Major Games' employees who stated that workplace intensity and pressure is often related to the global nature of Major events, and where scrutiny and visibility of the event is based on economic, political, and social premises. Given such pressures, employees feel a heightened sense of responsibility for the success of the event. Such pressures may additionally allow for Major Games' employees to experience a sense of competition within the event context, where successful delivery of the mega-event is paramount to perceptions of event success internationally.

Third, participants noted the opportunities they had to act as leaders in both formal and informal settings, a finding aligned with Warner et al.'s (2013) factors influencing sense of community. Specifically, participants' mentioning of collaborative and team-centered experiences indicates that the opportunity to develop leadership skills through mutual peer leadership may assist in their perception of workplace fulfillment. Fourth, participants noted the opportunity to interact with others in social spaces as influencing the degree to which they perceive a sense of community among their team or organization (Warner et al., 2013). Participants specified examples of intra-organization sport competitions and team meal/pub nights as impacting the development of sense of community within such social spaces.

A common thread through the literature (Lin, Chalip, & Green, 2016; Warner et al., 2013) surrounding the development of sense of community within organizations includes the role of leaders themselves. For example, Warner et al. (2013) note that leader support is pivotal to followers' experience of sense of community. This assertion aligns with participant data from this study, where participants felt that their leader's

influence prominently related to the development of team and organizational culture, which they further found as influential to the development of their perceived workplace fulfillment.

As discussed through this chapter, participants perceived Major Games' leaders to influence team/organizational culture through behaviours including empowerment, trust, support, and communication, all of which impacted participants' experience of sense of community. Furthermore, participants perceived their personal values aligned within the culture of specific teams or the event as a whole through athlete/client services, the sense of achievement and purpose everyone felt through the duration of the event, and sense of value felt from leaders and team members. Simply, it was found that Major Games' leaders influence development of team or organizational culture, thereby playing a role in the construction of participants' sense of community and their experience of value congruence within Major Games organizations.

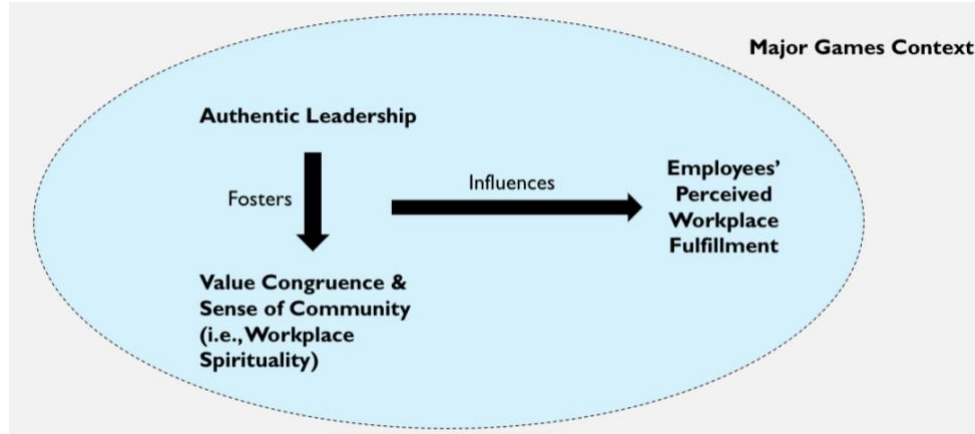
Fulfillment

While findings associated Major Games leader's influence on organizational culture, value congruence, and sense of community with employees' perceived workplace fulfillment, it is important to discuss the role of theoretical frameworks including authentic leadership and workplace spirituality in study outcomes, as related to this particular association. As the purpose of this study was to explore the significance of authentic leadership and workplace spirituality on the development of employees' perceived workplace fulfillment in the Major Games context, linkages between the theoretical frameworks and constructs emerging from these data are discussed. As indicated through collected data, results of this study align with the researcher's initial

proposition; that is, leaders' demonstration of authentic leader behaviour fosters environments of workplace spirituality, which thereby influences employees' perceived workplace fulfillment in the Major Games context.

Through leaders creating environments that honour followers' personal values, mutual respect and trust, and collaborative work relationships—that is, by their demonstration of these particular behaviours—Patrick (2013) notes authentic leaders create empowering, autonomous, and interdependent work climates for employees, which was found to align with participants' perceptions as positively impactful to the development of organizational culture, value congruence, and sense of community. Where workplace spirituality is rooted in meaningful work taking place in the context of community, both the value congruence and sense of community constructs closely resemble characteristics of workplace spirituality through their relation to Major Games employees' development of meaning through work and experience of community at work. Finally, as participants noted value congruence and sense of community as the two strongest contributors to the development of their perceived workplace fulfillment, it is reasonable to identify that it is through characteristics of authentic leader behaviour that Major Games employees experience perceived value congruence and sense of community (i.e., workplace spirituality) leading towards their perceived workplace fulfillment (see Figure 4).

Figure 4: Theoretical Frameworks – Results



Conclusion

Throughout this Chapter, participant data were explored toward practical and theoretical significance in the sport industry. While through the chapter, a detailed appraisal of the Major Games environment and Major Games leader influence was provided, connections between participant data and organizational culture, value congruence, sense of community, and fulfillment were further uncovered. As participants noted, Major Games' leaders influence the development of organizational culture, thereby influencing employees to perceive their values as aligned and a sense of community present among Major Games organizations and teams. Given participants' noting that value congruence and sense of community are the largest contributors to the development of their perceived workplace fulfillment, the researcher concludes that it is through exertion of authentic leadership behaviours (e.g., employee trust, collaboration, employee value prioritization) that these leaders foster (a sense) workplace spirituality for employees—vis-à-vis value congruence and sense of community—such that participants could express having experienced perceived workplace fulfillment in the Major Games context.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSIONS

Through this final chapter, conclusions of the study are detailed. Where the purpose of the study was to explore the relationship between authentic leadership and workplace spirituality on the development of employees' perceived workplace fulfillment in the Major Games context, a discussion of implications, recommendations, limitations, delimitations, and future research directions follows. Moreover, with specific consideration of the three associated research questions that guided this study, including: 1) how is the Major Games workplace described based on employees' experiences?; 2) how do Major Game employees perceive leader qualities of the leaders they encounter in this working environment?; and 3) how is employees' perceived workplace fulfillment positively or negatively influenced in the Major Games context, if at all?, closing thoughts and statements regarding participant data and research outcomes toward application, both theoretically and practically, to the sport industry are provided.

Implications of the Study's Findings

The findings of this study have implications for both sport management academicians and practitioners, given the findings impact both sport leaders and employees. First, relative to the current sport management literature, this study is a first empirical attempt to create a connection between theoretical frameworks of authentic leadership, workplace spirituality, and employees' perceived workplace fulfillment, particular to the Major Games context. While authentic leadership theory has guided many empirical leadership studies in the management literature, workplace spirituality is a construct used in psychology and business ethics texts. Moreover, the fulfillment

construct has lacked theoretical prominence in the sport management and wider management literatures, given it has been represented through the construct of eudaemonic wellbeing (i.e., as embodying similar characteristics to the fulfillment construct of fully engaged individuals, true to themselves, realizing their potential). Specifically, this study provides a platform for future research when viewing organizational and leadership issues combining authentic leadership, workplace spirituality, or employees' perceived workplace fulfillment frameworks in cohesion with other frameworks, ultimately benefitting the existing sport management literature in terms of how such issues are viewed.

Moreover, while the research findings provide theoretical insight specifically into the Major Games working environment, they also illuminate employees' perceptions of their leaders and the Major Games context itself for industry practitioners, an important element to note for the development of both employees and leaders alike. Through the study's research questions, which focused on employee perspectives regarding topics of the Major Games environment, Major Games leaders, and their experiences with workplace fulfillment, findings help to further shape the importance of employee relations, value congruence, sense of community, and workplace fulfillment in this particular sport organizational setting. With past research detailing both the detriments of employee dissatisfaction and the benefits of employee satisfaction in sport organizations (Bos *et al.*, 2013; Fuller *et al.*, 1999; MacIntosh & Doherty, 2011; Maier, 2011; Patrick, 2013; van der Walt & de Klerk, 2014; Wallace & Weese, 1995; Wu & Wu, 2011), this research demonstrates the impact that Major Games leaders have on employees' workplace experience, calling for a shift of leader behaviours toward employee service

(e.g., professional development opportunities) as a method of increasing employee satisfaction and decreasing employee dissatisfaction.

Second, relative to research implications on leaders and employees in Major Games environments, the findings illuminate the influence of leaders on employees' workplace fulfillment, whereby Major Games' leaders gained insight into employees' perceptions, needs and motivations, while employees reflected upon and shared their perceptions of leadership and contextual characteristics pertaining to the Major Games working environment. As such, from the findings, Major Games leaders may gain insight into the perceptions and motivations of followers, along with ideas on leadership practices that are perceived as most ideal by Major Games employees. In so doing, leaders may gain increased understanding of their inherent role in the development of Major Games employees' perceived workplace fulfillment, while additionally gaining strategies to lead differently – via the authentic leadership framework – to positively affect the development of employees' perceived workplace fulfillment.

For study participants (i.e., Major Games employees), implications of this study relate to an opportunity for further reflection, such that they gain increased understanding regarding their experiences and motivations for seeking and continuing careers within the Major Games context. Such implications are beneficial to study participants as the research design aimed to allow for participants' reflective insight into their work environment with interview questions surrounding participant experience of the Major Games environment, the influence of leaders on participant experience within said environment, and participants' subsequent perception of their own workplace fulfillment. Through research questions posed within semi-structured interviews, along with the

dialogue generated, participants could engage in thought surrounding how they perceive their Major Games working environment, their interactions with leaders, and their levels of perceived workplace fulfillment related to workplace environments. By allowing their contemplation on the positive, negative, and ideal qualities/characteristics of each of the above elements, participants were supported through their development of and sharing of perspectives, drawing insights that may now have been recognized prior to the interview session.

Detailed by various participants, the subject matter of the study was appreciated, where participants may have lost sight of the motivations that led them to initially engage in the Major Games industry, feeling hope and rejuvenation that fulfillment would once again be present in their workplace experiences following the interview session. As Participant U shared: "... I think it's just actually perfect timing to be asked these questions (laughs)... for me... Knowing that the fulfillment will come at the end... Just a little reminder." To extrapolate to larger groups of Major Games' employees, by creating an environment where reflection as an exercise is both valued and practiced by participants is an important implication, given the positive intrapersonal benefits (i.e., increased understanding by participants into their motivations and needs in workplace contexts). Moreover, while benefits associated with the study may impact participants, the study may additionally contribute to reflection and insight by wider Major Games employees, as it may have inspired further dialogue between study participants and their peers, allowing for other Major Games employees to engage in thought surrounding their experiences working in the Major Games context.

Recommendations

Through consideration of participant data and past research, the researcher recommends that Major Games leaders focus on developing characteristics of authentic leadership, including: empowerment, trust, value congruence, and collaboration so that achieving a positive organizational culture may be perceived and experienced by employees (Avolio et al., 2004). With leaders both demonstrating open communication and allowing others to openly communicate, while providing autonomy and support, leaders may aid in establishing positive team and organizational cultures, where employees perceive their values to be aligned and a sense of community to exist. With leaders enacting such behaviours, employees may experience increased levels of perceived workplace fulfillment and positive energy in the workplace, decreased stress, improved satisfaction, and increased productivity may result (Davenport, 2015), all of which are outcomes postulated as particularly beneficial to the time-sensitive, pressurized, and ever-changing environment of the Major Games context.

Limitations & Delimitations

Limitations specific to this study involve organizational and contextual characteristics of the Major Games industry, in that they provide a uniquely diverse, high pressure, and complex environment in which employees operate. With this, findings may be affected by various event variables, including the lifespan of the events (i.e., time of data collection) and situational variables including position of participants and time of participant hiring. Additionally, while findings were thought to be potentially limited should data collection occur while participants were either involved in the context being studied (i.e., currently employed by a Major Games Organizing Committee) or

conversely, far removed from the context, such a limitation did not appear to impact the findings.

Consideration of the study participants selected must be noted, as the Major Games community is known to be one characterized by close bonds between individuals. As such, selected participants may have previously worked together or may have personal relationships with organizational members and leaders whom they may choose to discuss or whose discussion may be relevant. Though participants were not required to share specific information (e.g., names of the leaders for whom they have worked), these relationships may have had an effect on information shared by participants, and thereby the data collected. Though this is a limitation associated with most qualitative research studies, confidentiality and anonymity measures taken by the researcher were found to mediate this limitation by creating a safe environment where participants felt comfortable to openly share. Third, the physical place of the data collection was initially considered as a potential limitation, given the majority of interviews were conducted via telephone or by online conference system (e.g., Skype). Though the lack of in-person interview session was postulated as potentially limiting due to the lack of personal connection that the researcher would otherwise establish had participants been situated locally to engage in face-to-face interviews, the researcher does not believe that such limitations in fact ensued.

In the current study, the researcher purposely delimited the study in several ways. A first delimitation included participants having been employed within a 7-year timeframe (2010-2017) in one or more Major Games events. Second, participants must have been employed in positions as Manager or Coordinator in sport related functional

areas (i.e., Sport Manager, Games Family Relations Manager, Medal Ceremonies Coordinator etc.). The researcher selected these two delimitations to ensure that she would recruit a larger sample of participants, while ensuring that employees' perceptions on their experiences remained relatively relevant and current. Furthermore, the researcher purposefully recruited participants employed as Managers and Coordinators of Major Games events with an aim of establishing homogeneity within the sample, given the similar structural and role characteristics of such positions (i.e., lifespan of event; tasks and requirements of positions; sport involvement), despite Major Games context (i.e., location). Third, though phenomenographical studies may include between 10-30 participants (Trigwell, 2000; Tight, 2016), the researcher's delimited the sample to total 20 participants to reflect the scope of a Master's thesis project.

Future Research

Through the data collection and analysis processes, the researcher was illuminated to future areas of research as potentially fruitful areas for sport management scholars to explore. To begin, the current sport literature requires an in-depth analysis of Major Games employees' experience with the transition between phases – planning to operations – within Major Games Organizing Committees. As the Major Games environment is understood to be unique in nature, and as participants made particular note to the unique and complex shift from planning to delivery of a Major Games event, an analysis of such a transition on the employee workplace experience may be an asset.

While literature surrounding mega-sport events provides insight into the Major Games environment, scholars (Parent, 2008; Parent & Foreman, 2007; Parent & Séguin, 2008; Parent, Olver & Beaupré, 2009) explore the Major Games context through topics

of identity management, issue patterns, brand creation, and leadership within Major Games Organizing Committees, while transitional experiences remain unexplored. As such, gaining increased understanding of employee experience with organizational transitions from planning to operational phases among Major Games Organizing Committees may be beneficial to industry practitioners and scholars. Particularly, this unexplored area may be beneficial for scholars and practitioners to understand, given these transitions are undoubtedly present in the lifespan of all Major Games events, and given participants' reporting on them as being stimulus for causing feelings of intensity, pressure, and stress among Major Games' employees. Thus, knowledge surrounding effective management throughout said organizational shifts may be of asset. Specifically, the researcher suggests that through developing a deeper understanding of Major Games employees' perceived workplace fulfillment during such organizational shifts, leaders may enact appropriate strategies to effectively manage and support large groups of followers through these unique shifts. Further, studying these shifts may illuminate the need for leader behaviours to also shift specifically to accommodate unique situations that arise during transitional periods within a Major Games organization.

Second, further inquiry into leaders' own perspective regarding authentic leadership practices, workplace spirituality, and perceived workplace fulfillment serves as a natural progression toward further understanding the relationship between employees' perceived workplace fulfillment in the Major Games context. While through this study, Major Games' employees provided insight regarding experiences with these constructs, inquiry into Major Games' leader perspectives may expand upon the findings of this study. Providing the major stakeholder view of these leaders may allow for both

new perspectives on these theoretical frameworks to emerge, and cultivate an opportunity for comparison and contrast of participants' perceptions gathered from both Major Games' leaders and employees.

Third, in this study, questions regarding the presence of fulfillment – vis-à-vis eudaemonic wellbeing – among wider sport organizations were raised. Specifically in Chapter II, fulfillment and wellbeing were outlined as important constructs for sport industry leaders to consider in work, based upon their respective associations with positive employee and organizational outcomes. Despite such outlining, the question of employees' motivations in seeking sport careers, along with what if anything, such employees associate with feelings of fulfillment regarding workplace roles remains. As such, a study centralizing on employees' perceptions of their own eudaemonic wellbeing (i.e., fulfillment) in sport organizations outside of the Major Games context would be an asset to the wider sport industry.

Fourth, future research could discover how sport organizational leaders may support employees' development of perceived workplace fulfillment through Human Resource Management initiatives, given the positive association that such relationships have on individual and organizational outcomes, as noted through this study. While Human Resource Management departments exist among sport organizations, an empirical appraisal of their practices and initiatives towards fostering employee fulfillment in workplace contexts would be an asset, demonstrating current work climates experienced by employees, along with desired and required areas for sport organizations to improve to better serve their employees.

Fifth, future research on the adverse effects of a lack of workplace spirituality on

employees' perceived workplace fulfillment in Major Games and wider sport organizational contexts may be interesting to further understand the benefit of employees' perceived workplace fulfillment. While this study, among others, have disclosed the organizational benefits of employee satisfaction, wellbeing, and fulfillment, a greater understanding of a lack of fulfillment on employee and organizational success may help gain a more holistic understanding of the importance of such characteristics among sport organizations. Particularly, in studying Major Games employees who have exited the industry due to a lack of fulfillment, Major Games leaders, along with colleagues within the larger Organizing Committees, may gain a greater understanding of the effects of employee dissatisfaction, along with insight into a leader's ability to positively impact employees' feelings of dissatisfaction toward positive outcomes (e.g., employee retention).

Conclusion

In this study, the purpose of exploring the relationship between authentic leadership and workplace spirituality on the development of employees' perceived workplace fulfillment in the Major Games context was accomplished. The study's purpose was achieved through the researcher's illumination of industry trends, revealing her practical background in a variety of Major Games' contexts, conducting an in-depth analysis of literature and theoretical frameworks, discussing the research design and methodologies used, uncovering the findings, and discussing such findings as applied to both theoretical and industry-based relevance. Where the author initially postulated that characteristics of authentic leadership would influence the presence of workplace spirituality, and thus, levels of employees' perceived workplace fulfillment, findings

pointed toward trends including value congruence and sense of community, and themes of empowerment and support as primary influencers on the development of employees' perceived workplace fulfillment. From these findings, through Major Games leaders applying characteristics of authentic leadership – including empowerment and social support – towards development of positive organizational cultures, it may seem that Major Games employees may experience value congruence and sense of community (i.e., workplace spirituality), thereby increasing the development of their perceived workplace fulfillment in the Major Games industry.

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APPENDIX A
Recruitment Script
(To be emailed by the PSI).

April ##, 2017

Dear Name,

It was a pleasure getting to know you through (name of Major Games Organizing Committee, Date, Location). As you may recall, I am a graduate student pursuing my Master of Arts (M.A.) degree within the Faculty of Applied Health Sciences, at Brock University in St. Catharines, Ontario. To that end, I am currently involved in the research process for my thesis project entitled “Don’t Worry, Be Fulfilled: Exploring Employee Experience with Leadership and Fulfillment in the Major Games Context.”

I invite you to participate in this research project, given your experience and expertise working within the unique work context of a Major Games Organizing Committee. Specifically, I am seeking your participation in a one-on-one telephone or videoconference interview with me about the degree of fulfillment you have experienced while working in your role within the Major Games industry and the influence that relevant Major Games leaders have had on the development of your experience of fulfillment, if any. An interview with me will be 30 to 60 minutes in duration and will be completed anytime between April and June, depending on your schedule.

Please note that your participation in this research is completely voluntary. Specifically, your participation (or lack thereof) in this research will not have any impact on your past or current organization, and your identity will be kept confidential.

If you are interested in participating in this research, or have any questions about the research study or process, please see the attached Letter of Invitation. If you are interested in participating in this research, please contact me (Lindsay Smith) by responding to this email.

Sincerely,

Lindsay Smith, BSM

Principal Investigator (PI):
Dr. Kirsty Spence, Associate Professor

Department of Sport Management
Brock University

Student Principle Investigator (SPI):
Lindsay Smith, MA Candidate

Faculty of Applied Health Sciences
Brock University

905-668-5550 ext. 5027
kspence@brocku.ca

416-525-2367
ls10en@brocku.ca

This study was reviewed and received ethics clearance through Brock University's Research Ethics Board (File: 16-255).

APPENDIX B
Letter of Participant Invitation

April ##, 2017

Title of Study:	Don't Worry, Be Fulfilled: Exploring Employee Experience with Leadership and Fulfillment in the Major Games Context
Principal Investigator:	Dr. Kirsty Spence, Professor, Department of Sport Management, Brock University
Student Principal Investigator:	Lindsay Smith, MA Candidate, Faculty of Applied Health Sciences, Brock University

I, Lindsay Smith, Student Principal Investigator (SPI), invite you to participate in a research project titled "Don't Worry, Be Fulfilled: Exploring Employee Experience with Leadership and Fulfillment in the Major Games Context."

The purpose of this research is to explore the significance of authentic leadership and workplace spirituality on the development of employees' perceived workplace fulfillment in the Major Games context. Specifically, I will be exploring a focus on employee experience with perceived fulfillment, the influence that Major Games leaders hold on employee workplace experience and employee development of fulfillment.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. Should you provide consent to participate, I will ask you to engage in a telephone or videoconferencing interview session (approximately 30-60 minutes in duration), in which you will be asked to discuss your experiences and perspectives on Major Games leadership and development of fulfillment. I will audio record your interview, which I will transcribe soon after your interview.

Should you choose to decline participation in the study, I will not be impacted insofar as to my ability to successfully complete the research or to successfully obtain my M.A. degree. You, as a potential participant, are by no means obligated to partake in this study; and, if you consent to participate to then later choose to withdraw, you may do so at any time with no consequences.

The research findings may offer the following benefits. First, through involvement in the study, you may gain reflective insight into the Major Games work environment, which may be later applied in their actual work environment to a positive degree. Second, the research may contribute to the existing body of knowledge in the sport management literature regarding topics of leadership and employee fulfillment in the Major Games environment. Third, the research may further provide a platform from which future research projects may emerge, related to leaders, leadership, and employee fulfillment in the unique Major Games context.

Risks associated with the study include social risks (i.e., possible loss of status, privacy, and/or reputation), given participant roles will be included within well-known Major

Game organizations, and difficult experiences that are probed through interview questions. Despite intentions for and use of pseudonyms to protect confidentiality and anonymity (i.e., no mention of other organizations as identifiers, locked data under PSI's password protected personal computer, PI and PSI sole individuals having access to data), anonymity in particular cannot be guaranteed.

If you have any pertinent questions about your rights and/or involvement as a research participant in this study, please contact the Brock University Research Ethics Officer (905 688-5550 ext. 3035, reb@brocku.ca). Furthermore, if you have any questions, please feel free to contact me (see below for contact information).

Thank you,

Dr. Kirsty Spence, Associate Professor
905-668-5550 ext. 5027
kspence@brocku.ca

Lindsay Smith, M.A. Candidate
416-525-2367
ls10en@brocku.ca

This study [**will be**] reviewed and received ethics clearance through Brock University's Research Ethics Board (File: 16-255).

APPENDIX C
Letter of Informed Consent

Date: March ##, 2017

Project Title: Don't Worry, Be Fulfilled: Exploring Employee Experience with Leadership and Fulfillment in the Major Games Context

Principal Investigator (PI): Dr. Kirsty Spence,
Associate Professor
Department of Sport Management, Brock
University
905-668-5550 ext. 5027; kspence@brocku.ca

Student Principal Investigator (SPI): Lindsay
Smith, M.A. Candidate
Faculty of Applied Health Sciences, Brock
University
416-525-2367; ls10en@brocku.ca

INVITATION

You are invited to participate in a study that involves research. The purpose of this study is to explore the significance of authentic leadership and workplace spirituality on the development of employees' perceived workplace fulfillment in the Major Games context. This research seeks to discover an in-depth understanding of employee experience in the Major Games environment, along with the impact of Major Games leaders on employee experience.

WHAT'S INVOLVED

As a participant, you will be asked to share experiences, reflective of your role working with a Major Games organization. These experiences can be positive or negative in nature, as they will be applied to what is currently known regarding leadership and the Major Games environment. The success of this project is embedded in the researchers' intention to discover trends experienced by employees in the Major Games industry, related to the role of leaders and to the development of employee fulfillment. As such, experiences need to be reflective of your role as a Manager or Coordinator in a Major Games Organizing Committee, and the impact of this experience on your level of workplace fulfillment. Once you have shared your experiences, the researcher may ask probing questions to elicit further understanding on such impact. Questions will be used to gain a more in depth understanding into your experiences with leadership within the unique Major Games environment. Participation will encompass a one-time interview via telephone or videoconferencing software (30-60 minutes in length). Interviews and the interview process will be audio recorded. Verbal confirmation of participant consent will be asked prior to commencement of interview questions.

Following the one-time interview session, the researcher will immediately transcribe the interview and once complete, will send you a copy (via email), where you will have the option to review, respond to, and make changes to as you see fit. You will be given one week to review the transcript and email your approval or any changes that you would wish to make. Your reviewing of the transcript should take approximately 15 minutes. If you do not return the transcript within the 7-day timeframe, the researcher will still use your data in her study.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS AND RISKS

Potential benefits to participant involvement in the study include gaining of reflective insight into the Major Games work environment, which may be later applied by participants in their actual work environment to a positive degree.

This research may contribute to the existing body of knowledge in the sport management literature regarding topics of leadership and employee fulfillment in the Major Games environment. The research may further provide a platform from which future research projects may emerge, related to leaders, leadership, and employee fulfillment in the unique Major Games context.

Given participant roles will be included in this study (i.e., Manager/Coordinator within a Major Games Organizing Committee), study participants may be identified by such a role(s), despite names of specific Major Games organizations being omitted and intentions for and use of pseudonyms. While all attempts will be made to protect confidentiality and anonymity (i.e., no mention of Major Games organizations as identifiers, locked data under the principle student investigator's password protected personal computer, principle investigator and principle student investigator as sole individuals with access to data), anonymity in particular cannot be guaranteed.

Given that interview questions may probe difficult experiences among participants, "social risks" associated with participating in this study may occur (i.e., possible loss of status, privacy, and/or reputation).

CONFIDENTIALITY

All information you provide is considered confidential; your name will not be included (replaced with a pseudonym), or in any other way associated with provided information (data) collected in the study. The data collected for this study will be stored in the password-protected personal computer of the Principal Student Investigator for a 4-year time period (September 2021) following the defense of her thesis (September 2017), in the event of her creating further publications or conference presentations. After the 4-year time period, all data will be destroyed (i.e., confidential shredding and deletion of electronic files).

Access to these data will be restricted to the Principal Student Investigator and her Faculty Supervisor.

VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION

Participation in this study is voluntary. Should you choose to decline participation in the study, your choice will have no impact on the ability of the researcher to successfully complete the research project or obtain her degree. You are by no means obligated to partake in the study and should you choose to withdraw at anytime, you will incur no consequences. Withdrawal may take place for up to one week following the interview session to consider the advancement of the data analysis process. In the event of withdraw from the project you may contact the PSI via email to indicate your wish. At

this time, the PSI will give you the option to remove relevant collected data from the study (i.e., the PSI will destroy any/all hard or electronic participant data and documents) or leave collected data in the study. Furthermore, it is to your own discretion what you choose to disclose to the researcher.

PUBLICATION OF RESULTS

Results of this study may be published in professional journals and presented at conferences. If you wish to receive a final report of this research please indicate so to the principal student investigator upon completion of the interview session. The principle student investigator will send you an electronic copy in December 2017.

CONTACT INFORMATION AND ETHICS CLEARANCE

If you have any questions about this study or require further information, please contact Dr. Kirsty Spence or Lindsay Smith using the contact information provided previously. This study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through the Research Ethics Board at Brock University (File: 16-255). If you have any comments or concerns about your rights as a research participant, please contact the Research Ethics Office at (905) 688-5550 Ext. 3035, reb@brocku.ca.

Thank you for your assistance in this project. Please keep a copy of this Letter of Informed Consent for your records.

CONSENT FORM

I agree to participate in this study described above. I have made this decision based on the information I have read in the Information-Consent Letter. I have had the opportunity to receive any additional details I wanted about the study and understand that I may ask questions in the future. I understand that I may withdraw this consent at any time.

Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Script to be read aloud with each participant prior to the start of interview:

Thank you very much for agreeing to participate in this research. The purpose of this study is to explore the significance of authentic leadership and workplace spirituality on the development of employees' perceived workplace fulfillment in the Major Games context. Specifically, I will be exploring the influence that Major Games' leaders have, if any, on employee workplace experience and employee development of fulfillment.

The interview will take approximately 30-60 minutes in duration, and will be audio recorded. Prior to the interview commencing, I would like to ask for your verbal consent to participating in this research. Having read the Letter of Informed Consent, do you provide your verbal consent to participate in the described study? Do you currently require any additional details about the study? Do you understand that you may ask me any questions regarding the study in the future, and understand that you may also withdraw your consent to participate at any time? (Answer). Thank you. Let's begin.

During the interview and when I ask questions, you should feel free to skip over, come back to, or change your answers at any time. When I am finished my interviews and come to write my thesis report, I will replace your name and/or any references to organizations/other individuals with a pseudonym or I will omit your name and other identifiers (i.e., organizations/other individuals) completely. I will provide you with a typed and complete transcript of this interview and you will have a 7-day period to review and change any responses, as you see fit.

Before we begin, I would like to remind you that interview questions are intended to explore characteristics of Major Games' leaders, rather than to disclose names of leaders. When thoughts of specific leaders arise, please describe leader qualities/characteristics omitting their names. Otherwise the researcher will do so for you.

Do you have any questions about the study, your rights as a participant, or my responsibilities as a researcher?

Questions to be asked from which probes will stem:

Introductory Questions

- Can you please tell me the following demographic information, to be considered as potential rationales during the analysis process:
 1. What is your age?
 2. What is your nationality/residence of birth?
 3. When did you first become involved with a Major Games event?
 4. How many Major Games events have you been involved in to date and where were they located?

Exploratory Questions

1. Please think about your role in a Major Games event with which you've been involved as a Manager or Coordinator.
 - a. Please describe the Major Games working environment, based on your experiences. (Workplace Spirituality)
 - b. Please tell me a/some word(s) (qualities/characteristics) that describe the industry.
 - i. Why did you choose those word(s)?
2. Please think about leaders with whom you have interacted in your Major Games role.
 - a. Can you describe these leaders? (Authentic Leadership)
 - i. Can you give a/some word(s) that you associate with these leaders?
 1. Why did you choose these word(s)?
 - b. Can you elaborate on some specific qualities that these leaders exemplify that you enjoy?
 - c. Can you elaborate on some specific qualities that these leaders exemplify that you don't enjoy?
 - d. Were you involved with leaders from cultures different from your own? If yes, can you speak to qualities/experiences of that relationship?
 - e. What impact have these qualities had on the work environment?
 - i. Does this impact your workplace experience?
3. Please think about your role in a Major Games event with which you've been involved as a Manager or Coordinator How would you define workplace fulfillment, in your own words?
 - a. When you think of workplace fulfillment, would you describe your view of fulfillment as feeling good versus feeling bad, or being fully engaged and true to oneself? (Hedonic vs. Eudaemonic)
 - b. How would you describe the importance of perceived workplace fulfillment in your role as a Major Games employee? (Employees' Perceived Workplace Fulfillment)
4. Please think about your role in a Major Games event with which you've been involved as a Manager or Coordinator, can you describe what would influence the development of employees' perceived workplace fulfillment, in your opinion? (Employees' Perceived Workplace Fulfillment + Authentic Leadership)
 - a. Who and / or what has had the largest impact on you feeling fulfilled (or not feeling fulfilled) in your role in the Major Games industry?
5. Can think of any questions pertaining to my study that I have not yet asked?
6. Do you have questions of me?
7. Is there anything you'd like to add as a final word?

Are you interested in receiving a final report of this research?

Thank you for your time.